

# The PSNews

*Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care*

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## Greetings from the President



If you're like me, Spring can't get here fast enough! This time of year always makes me think about all of the new life we have to look forward to in the spring that gets us through these long winter months.

Similarly, all kinds of new students come through the department eager to learn what a Respiratory Therapist does in a hospital setting. We see respiratory students, nursing students, allied health students, paramedic students, and new potential-students that just want an opportunity to shadow an RT to see if it might be a career they might like to do in the future.

It really is great fun being able to work with so much raw talent and energy! We try to show them what an excellent opportunity respiratory care is and that it can open many doors for them. In my hospital alone, we have Respiratory Therapists as Vice Presidents and Programming Directors in IT, an RT as an MD in charge of the ICU and Intensivist program, an RT as Chief of Perfusion, RTs working as RNs in ICU and NICU, RTs in Case Management and in Business Analytics. Our fellow RTs are working all over in Medical Sales, as Clinical Specialists, as Educators, and even as CEOs in hospitals in Western and Central, Pennsylvania. It really is what you

make of it. The effort and energy you put into it is what you will get out of it.

Not long ago, we had the opportunity to really make a difference in a young man's life. He was in his early thirties and was on a ventilator with a severe pneumonia and was failing conventional ventilation. He was on maximal FiO<sub>2</sub> and PEEP, and his condition was quickly sinking beyond hope. An RT pulled a multi-disciplinary team together to quickly explore what else could possibly be done to save this man's life. It was decided that his best chance of survival would lie with ECMO, which was a service our facility did not provide. We rapidly arranged for transport to a center that could provide this medical intervention and he has done well to this point. Without the RTs interjecting their expertise into the equation, things might not have happened so quickly and favorably.

Respiratory care isn't about handing out a few nebs or writing down a few numbers on a flow-sheet or in a computer. It isn't about running through the workload so you can get back to the department. It really is about applying your expertise and understanding of complex modalities, tools, and situations, to benefit the patient who is trusting you to help them return to health and their everyday life.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Eastern Regional Conference in April. It will be a great opportunity to learn, network, and have some fun!

## Mission

Represent Respiratory Therapists in Pennsylvania



## Spring is Coming!



## What's Happening in the Capital District? *by Tony Ruppert, RRT, CHT, District Director*



Let's start this article with the FUN stuff. We are hosting a PSRC Night at the Calder Cup Champion Hershey Bears ice hockey game! The date is Saturday, March 26, 2011 and tickets are just \$20.00! Join us as we get together to meet for the first time or reunite some friends while watching the makings of a potential trauma patient at a Saturday night hockey game. Doesn't that sound like a good time? It will be! Members can purchase tickets for their families and friends as well. Go to [www.psrc.net](http://www.psrc.net) for more information and to order your tickets.

The new bi-annual licensure period with increased education requirements has commenced, so let's talk education. The PSRC understands that many RTs require specialty education to satisfy certifications outside of the CRT or RRT credentials. Therefore, we are proud to present the 2nd Sleep Conference. Five (5) CRCEs in the realm of Sleep topics are planned. Registration is open for the March 24, 2011 conference that will be held in York, PA.

Mark your calendars and request your day off work for October 14, 2011. The Capital Conference committee is planning another fun and enlightening daylong event.

One of the slated presenters speaks nationally. He is also a frequent author on RT topics, particularly mechanical ventilation. At least seven (7) CRCEs will be offered and Dave Rubish's renowned exuberance will filter down to participants. Attendees may actually forget that they are attending a "conference."

Congratulations to the entire state of PA for earning first place in the DRIVE4COPD state society campaign. I was present in Las Vegas this past December to see the award presented to our President and Executive Director. I was very proud and honored to witness PA taking home a top award. Thank you to each member throughout PA who was responsible for completing 1 or 100 screens. Of course, it was a fun competition. More importantly, it was a chance to fluff your feathers as an RT and educate the public about our profession's number one adversary—COPD.

Lastly, I would like to reinforce that the PSRC board is here for you, to represent you and our profession. Therefore, please feel free to contact your district director, VP, President, or other board members. We want to hear from you! You can find contact information on [psrc.net](http://psrc.net). Capital District members can contact Tony Ruppert via email: [2011CapitalDistrict@psrc.net](mailto:2011CapitalDistrict@psrc.net)

Enjoy your Spring and Summer.

## From the Treasurer *by Karen Engle, RRT, CPFT – PSRC Treasurer*



The PSRC is a non profit organization run by an elected Board of Directors (except for the Executive Director) that meets four times a year to discuss and plan goals, activities and events. As volunteers, we have been planning, organizing and providing low cost seminars and conventions long before licensing and required CEUs came about. It takes a lot of work and planning by volunteers to provide these events and we are always looking for more volunteers.

The fees we charge barely cover the costs of the facility, food, supplies and speakers. As a non-profit organization, all excess collected funds go back into the organization to cover special community educational events (PFT screenings, COPD day, etc.) and lobbying for patient rights (Pulmonary rehab reimbursement, oxygen for patients, epi-pen in schools, etc.).

As the leading state affiliate of the AARC, the PRSC follows the same guidelines as the AARC but at the state level. The primary goal is advancement and improvement in the field of respiratory care for our patients and fellow therapists.

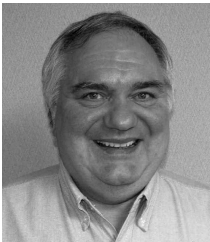
Advancing the field of respiratory benefits all RTs in the form of increased respect, knowledge, and salaries. The field of medicine is constantly changing and advancing; we,

as Respiratory Therapists, need to keep up with these changes to remain valuable assets to our patients and in the healthcare arena. What better way to keep up with change than through education? We strive to provide continuing education topics that pertain to current medical advancements.

The PSRC works very hard to provide low cost educational and fun events for our members and non-members. By becoming a member of the AARC, you become a member of the PSRC for no additional cost. We even provide a discount if you join or renew your AARC membership through the PSRC. Your membership also entitles you to discounts for traditional and non-traditional CEUs at PSRC-sponsored educational events and fun events. Not all seminars are associated with the PSRC and some can be more expensive.

During these tough economic times, the increased requirement of CEUs may be difficult for many to obtain. Please know that as AARC members, it is possible for you to earn all your "Live" continuing education credits for FREE by attending the AARC "Live" web casts at home on your computer. The AARC also offers many FREE non-traditional credits on their website. For those RT's who enjoy attending seminars and conventions, our commitment to you is to continue to provide low cost events so RTs can meet, network, see new equipment from vendors, earn CEUs and have fun!

## Greetings from the Great Northwest! *by Ken Kraut, District Director*



Greetings from the great (and cold) Northwest District. We had a very successful 3rd Annual Fall Seminar at UPMC Hamot on Saturday, October 23, 2010 with 38 attendees. I would like to thank the Karl Storz Corporation and Carefusion for sponsoring speakers.

Our 31st Annual Spring Seminar will be held on Friday, April 29, 2011 in the Hemingway Ballroom at the Ambassador Conference Center in Erie, PA. Six (6) CEUs will be available. The seminar is limited to 150 attendees, so register early at [psrc.net](http://psrc.net).

Congratulations to the 2011 graduates of the Mercyhurst College Respiratory Care Program. Welcome to the respiratory care family.

We are always in need of volunteers to help with the Northwest District and PSRC committees and events. If you are interested, please contact me at [2011NWDistrict@psrc.net](mailto:2011NWDistrict@psrc.net).

In our continuing series on the health care facilities in



*(left to right) Charles Cornfield, Scott Marton, Ken Kraut and Marietta Kuehn at the 3rd Annual Fall Seminar.*

the Northwest district, we are focusing in this issue on UPMC Northwest in Seneca, PA. Melissa K. Perry, RRT, CPFT, Director of Respiratory Care, submitted the following article:

### UPMC Northwest



UPMC Northwest is located in Seneca (Venango County), Pennsylvania. The hospital is licensed for 180 beds, and the respiratory staff of 20 covers acute care, as well as the Behavioral Health, Transitional Care, and Rehabilitation units. The hospital staff depends on the support of the Respiratory Care Department for traumas, strokes and cardiac arrests. Some of the many responsibilities of the respiratory therapist include ventilator management

and respiratory care protocols. The staff acts as strong advocates for smoking cessation for patients, and are involved in a new, aggressive pulmonary rehabilitation program for patients with COPD. The Respiratory Care Department strives to inspire students to be the best that they can be in the profession that they love. For more information about UPMC Northwest or its Respiratory Care Department, visit [northwest.upmc.com](http://northwest.upmc.com) or phone 814-676-7103.

## South Central District Update *by Jackie Oravec, RRT, RPSGT, CPFT, District Director*



In December, 2010, the PSRC, with the support of Highlands Home Health, offered an evening of education and networking to therapists. The event was held at the Arena Restaurant in Bedford and featured lectures on Safety, Ethics and COPD. It was great to have so many colleagues from the local area as well as the far corners of

our great state and even a therapist from Delaware.

Next on the agenda for South Central is the Student Sputum Bowl to be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2011.

This event will be held in conjunction with the Conference at the Slopes at Seven Springs Resort. Last year's competition was the first held in the western part of the state in several years. Seven teams from five different schools participated. For those who haven't been to a Sputum Bowl in a while (or ever) plan to come out that evening and support the students and enjoy the competition! You do not have to attend the conference to enjoy this event.

Winners of this event will advance to the state finals that will be held at the PSRC's Eastern Regional Seminar in April. Students—there is still time to get a team together if you haven't already!

## PSRC Southwest District Update *by Matt VanCamp, RRT*



Happy Spring!

I am Matt VanCamp, the new PSRC Southwest District Director. Much has been happening in the SW district including a very successful community wellness event held on World COPD day November 17, 2010. The PSRC, in conjunction with Walgreen's Pharmacies, held spirometry screenings at seven of their locations in both the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia areas. My thanks goes out to all of the PSRC members who gave their time and expertise to help make this a success: Kristin Bauer, RRT, CPFT; Jancey Dailey, CRT; Arlene Hicks, RRT; Heather Hochendoner, RRT; Thomas Lamphere, BS, RRT, RPFT; Anthony Mullen, DNM, LCH, RCP, CH; Tom Rogerson, (RC student at LBI); Barb Soly, RPFT; Kristi Trauger, RRT; Mark Walker, RRT and Jim Yuras (RC student at LBI).

Plans are already underway for another multi-site spirometry screening event next fall! If you would like to participate send an email to [2011swdistrict@psrc.net](mailto:2011swdistrict@psrc.net). Special thanks to Tom Lamphere for making arrangements and taking the time to help make this a "state-wide" event!

As PSRC SW District Director, I plan to continually support our profession through outreach and education. This is why my first goal is to get out to the Respiratory schools and talk about the benefits of AARC/PSRC membership. In addition, I'll be talking to the students about professionalism

and how important this can be not only in searching for a job but after they are offered a position and begin working with patients.

We are in need of much more therapist involvement in the PSRC and the students are where it starts. Hopefully, this will eventually eliminate some of the complacency I have noticed over my years as a respiratory therapist and invigorate our "newbies" to be involved locally and, when possible, at the state and national levels!

I would also like to hear from everyone about what you think of the PSRC (good or bad) and recommendations about how to improve. Email me your opinions at [2011swdistrict@psrc.net](mailto:2011swdistrict@psrc.net). Don't hold back—brutal honesty will get you everywhere! But beware, I may ask for your help with something! We have a lot going on in the district and more volunteers are needed for various committees: legislative, management group, public relations, sputum bowl, and more!

I am excited to be representing the respiratory therapists in the greater Pittsburgh area and would like to thank all of you for electing me to this position! Don't forget about the South West Regional Conference to be held at the Four Points Sheraton in Cranberry. The conference is slated for September 29-30, 2011 and we are already getting some great speakers and topics together. It's shaping up to be a good one with at least 14 live CRCEs available including state required ethics and safety topics. See you there!

## PSRC Joins With Walgreens Pharmacy To Hold First Annual

### "World COPD Day" PFT Screenings *by Tom Lamphere BS, RRT, RPFT – PSRC Executive Director*

World COPD Day was held on November 17, 2010 and the PSRC held an unprecedented number of simultaneous pulmonary function screenings in both the western and eastern parts of the state! After nearly a year of planning, the PSRC joined with Walgreens Pharmacy to set up screenings at seven pharmacy locations in the Pittsburgh and suburban Philadelphia areas. We hope to repeat this initiative in 2011 and are already hard at work to add more locations!

Special thanks to PSRC SW District Director, Matt VanCamp, MBA, RRT, for spearheading the planning of this event. In addition, thanks to all the PSRC members who gave up some of their free time to help out performing the screenings including:

Kristin Bauer, RRT, CPFT  
 Jancey Dailey, CRT  
 Arlene Hicks, RRT  
 Heather Hochendoner, RRT  
 Thomas Lamphere, BS, RRT, RPFT  
 Anthony Mullen, DNM, LCH, RCP, CH  
 Tom Rogerson (RC student at Laurel Business Institute)  
 Barb Soly, RPFT  
 Kristi Trauger, RRT  
 Matt VanCamp, MBA, RRT  
 Mark Walker, RRT  
 Jim Yuras (RC student at Laurel Business Institute)



Heather Hochendoner, RRT



Matt VanCamp, MBA, RRT



Kristin Bauer, RRT, CPFT



Jancey Dailey, CRT

## Why I Am a Member of the AARC & PSRC *by Gail Varcelotti, BS, RRT, FAARC*



I don't know about you, but sometimes I don't understand why more people are not members of the AARC and PSRC. I have been in respiratory care for many years and, when I went to college an AARC membership was highly encouraged, as in, "here is the form, fill it out and bring it back with a check." Although at first I didn't quite understand, I gradually discovered the membership really helped me see my profession as just that, and not just a job. For some reason I see value where others just see expense...and that baffles me.

The question many continue to ask is "Are professional associations worth the cost of membership?" Or, "What's in it for me?" All I can say to that question is "plenty."

But, the AARC and PSRC isn't just for you, it is for everyone in respiratory care. It is an investment in "our" profession. But it requires members and membership fees to keep the goals of the AARC and PSRC moving forward.

A professional association such as the AARC and PSRC is an organization formed to unite and inform people who work in the same occupation. And, not only do they keep

you informed but, they give the profession a voice. Large numbers get to speak louder than a single voice. Maybe we need to actively encourage more of our peers to take a look at membership as a benefit rather than an expense. Maybe they will see there are many advantages to joining an association. These include:

- Networking opportunities, particularly in this day and age of e-technology.
- Continuing education (CE) is a requirement, and a key factor in respiratory care licensure. Most associations offer CE, or can keep you informed about CE in your area.
- Newsletters and Journals to keep you up to date on current events affecting your profession
- Employment opportunities
- Insurance for personal and professional needs

I encourage you to share this with your fellow workers who are not AARC/PSRC members and ask them why they don't belong. If the answer is "the expense isn't worth it," then ask them if the expense of not having a job because no one is united in providing the CE you need or representing the profession in Washington DC is worth it. You might find a new member right in front of you.

## Message from the Vice President of the PSRC *by Jay Salyers, MBA, RRT*



My name is Jay Salyers and I am the 2011 Vice President of the PSRC. My career in respiratory care began four years ago as a result of a career change from accounting and finance. The catalyst for my career change to respiratory care was caring for my dad as he battled pulmonary fibrosis.

The past four years have been filled with many challenges and opportunities. As a new graduate I began working at Lankenau Medical Center as a member of the respiratory care team. By the end of that year, a vacancy at my respiratory care alma mater (The West Chester University/Bryn Mawr Hospital Respiratory Care Program), combined with a desire to help shape the future of our profession, led me to my current role as Clinical Educator for the school as well as the Respiratory Care Department of Main Line Health. As such, I teach several courses throughout the year and visit various clinical affiliates

while our students are in clinical. The balance of my time is spent carrying out various educational endeavors for the Respiratory Care Department. Somehow during this time I managed to complete my master's degree.

I started to become involved with the PSRC as a volunteer when I was invited to join the group in Washington, DC for my first lobbying initiative. The more I learned about the PSRC, the more impressed I became. And that sparked my interest in becoming more integrally involved the organization.

So here I am, and to some it may seem like I "drank the Cool-Aid." Maybe I have, but more importantly, I can see the impact that the PSRC has in shaping the future of our profession. What we do here in Pennsylvania reverberates throughout the rest of the country because of PSRC and its membership...YOU! That said; I look forward to meeting you at some of the PSRC events that will be held around our state and throughout the year. In the meantime please feel free to contact me with questions or comments.

## PSRC Offers Discounted Hershey Park Tickets!

The PSRC is once again offering tickets to Hersheypark located in Hershey, PA, at a HUGE savings. The park now offers over 65 rides and attractions including the "Boardwalk at Hersheypark" with seven water slides and over 54,000 gallons of water-soaked fun! The waterpark portion of the park was expanded in 2009 to include a huge wave pool and two other water attractions. The park will also feature eleven roller coasters including "Fahrenheit," the coaster with the steepest drop in the United States!

Tickets are good at any time during the normal 2011 park operating day from May 6th-September 25, 2011.

### PRICES for regular admission tickets

Adult (ages 9-54) <i>regularly</i> \$53.95!	\$30.00*
Junior/Senior (ages 3-8 and 55-69) <i>regularly</i> \$32.95!	\$25.00*
Senior Plus (ages 70+) <i>regularly</i> \$21.95!	\$21.00*

*\*credit card prices are \$1.00 more per ticket*

For more information and to order your tickets, go to <http://www.psrc.net/2011HersheyparkTickets.htm>

### Order Deadline:

**All ticket orders must be received by April 1, 2011**

## PSRC Screens the Highest Number in Drive4COPD Campaign!

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

In July, 2010, the AARC announced that it had joined the “Drive4COPD” campaign, a national public health initiative that aims to find the “missing millions” of people who may have COPD and don’t even know it.

Drive4COPD aspires to put the brakes on America’s 4th leading cause of death by helping people identify COPD symptoms and encouraging them to talk to their doctor.

The campaign, supported by celebrities including Nascar driver Danica Patrick, country music star Patty Loveless, Olympian Bruce Jenner, former NFL all-pro Michael Strahan and actor/comedian Jim Belushi, seeks to have one million people over the age of 35 complete a five question “pop-screener.” The questions are quick and easy to answer and identify individuals who have a greater risk of having COPD by assigning a score value to the answer given to each question. Anyone with a score of five or more is at risk!

During the summer AARC House of Delegates meeting, AARC state affiliates were asked to join the campaign and help get RTs involved in the screening process. Not only would the RTs be performing a public service, but they would be promoting their profession as well as they performed screenings in many different public locations including shopping malls, fairs and more!

As a little enticement, and to make things interesting, the AARC also announced a friendly competition was going to take place between the state societies to see which state would complete the highest number of screeners prior to November 16, 2010. The PSRC quickly jumped at the chance to show why we are the #1 state society in the country and began recruiting help in getting people to complete the Drive4COPD screener forms either via the special website link or on paper forms.

On July 26, 2010, the PSRC launched it’s statewide Drive4COPD campaign with an email to our membership asking our members to have their friends, family members, co-workers and anyone else they knew, over the age of 35, fill out the online screener form. Over the course of the next 14 weeks, over 1,000 screeners were completed via the website. But we were just getting started...

During the 14-week campaign, thousands of paper forms were mailed out to members who volunteered to get people to complete them at all kinds of events! Several members took the forms with them to their hospital-sponsored health fairs and PFT screenings (especially during RC week).

Special thanks to the following individuals and groups who submitted 100 or more screeners including:

- Students at Gwynedd Mercy College, Harrisburg Area Community College, Millersville University and the Laurel Business Institute.
- Tony Ruppert and the staff at York Hospital.
- Susan Telmanik Schwartz and the staff at Evangelical Hospital.

- Betty Jean Marconi at UPMC McKeesport.
- Margie Pierce and the staff at Fox Chase Cancer Center.
- The entire PSRC Board of Directors members—all of whom submitted multiple completed screeners.

Extra-special thanks go to the following groups who went above and beyond the call of duty!!!

- Students at the Reading Area Community College who submitted over 250 completed surveys collected when several groups of students spent a Saturday standing outside a Walmart asking shoppers to fill out the screener forms!

- Gwynedd Mercy College student, Jessica Goelz, PSRC member, Karen Blum (and her daughter) and PSRC Executive Director, Tom Lamphere (and his family) who stood in the lobby of the Sellersville Theater prior to concerts by country music star (and Drive4COPD supporter) Patty Loveless and urged concert attendees to complete the screeners.



L to R: Karen Blum, Jessica Goelz and Tom Lamphere get the family involved!



Karen Blum and daughter Alyee with Patty Loveless fans.



Jessica Goelz helps spread the word about COPD.

## PSRC Screens the Highest Number In Drive4COPD Campaign (continued)



*Students from the Reading Area Community College out and about working on the Drive4COPD.*

Finally, a big THANK YOU to the students West Chester University/Bryn Mawr Hospital and their Program Director, Brian Kellar, MS, MED, RRT-NPS, RPFT for completing over 1,900 screener forms!!!



*Students at the West Chester University / Bryn Mawr Hospital RT Program.*

Thanks to the efforts not only of the people listed above but many other PSRC members, students and other supporters, the PSRC screened approximately 6,000 people during the four month campaign! PSRC President, Steve Mosakowski and Executive Director, Tom Lamphere were on hand to accept the award for the most screenings among all AARC state affiliates during the AARC's International Congress in Las Vegas, NV.



*PSRC President, Steve Mosakowski and Executive Director, Tom Lamphere, receive the award for highest number of screenings in the Drive4COPD campaign from Tom Kallstrom, AARC Chief Operating Officer.*

## 2011 Legislative Session Strategy Planning Session

by Garry Kauffman, PSRC Chair, Governmental Affairs

### Legislative Initiatives

- ◇ Clean Indoor Air
  - Continue to support amendments to improve clean indoor air
  - Send letters as is appropriate
- ◇ Epi Pens
  - At implementation make a statement acknowledging the achievement of this legislation
- ◇ Sleep Center Legislation
  - Continue to monitor for new legislation
  - Garry to continue to provide updates on any national news

### Regulatory Initiatives

- ◇ State Boards of Medicine and Osteopathic Medicine RT Licensure Regulations
- ◇ Allied Health Professionals Board
  - Will continue to monitor for any new information on the possible formation of this board
- ◇ State Board of Medicine Health-Related Professionals sub-committee
  - Meet with George Roberts, AT and chair of the committee to introduce PSRC and provide a resource for any question regarding respiratory therapists
- ◇ Next RT rotation on State Board of Osteopathic Medicine
  - Athletic Trainer currently on rotation. Physician Assistant was the last rotation. RT was before the PA. RT should be up again at the end of the Athletic Trainer's term—3/10/2012
  - PSRC should start thinking about who they would like the Governor to appoint to that seat and start laying the groundwork in 2011


### Education and Outreach

- ◇ Legislative Day 2011
  - Date—Tentatively the second week in May; will determine when session schedule becomes available
  - Message—TBD
- ◇ Governor's Chronic Care Commission
  - Monitor status under new administration—may or may not exist
- ◇ PA Center for Health Careers—Role of PSRC
- ◇ Alliance of Health Care Providers
  - Freshmen Breakfast—The Winter Group will provide more information
- ◇ World COPD Day, November 2011
  - Location & Activity
  - Date TBD
- ◇ Veterans Day Resolution for RT Veterans
  - Governor's Office, House, and Senate—The Winter Group
  - Determine some new candidates to contact for resolutions
  - Garry to send The Winter Group language for resolution from AARC
- ◇ Respiratory Care Week Resolutions
  - House, Senate, and Governor's Office—The Winter Group
  - Determine some new candidates to contact for resolutions
- ◇ Create a new webpage on PSRC website containing both current and archived info
- ◇ Establish a formal relationship with other advocacy groups (PA AARP, PAMS)



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# Frequently Asked Questions on the NBRC's Continuing Competency Program

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



The PSRC has received numerous inquiries regarding the National Board for Respiratory Care's (NBRC) "Continuing Competency Program." This program effects ALL credentials earned after July 1, 2002. The following questions are those that we receive most often. The answers have been taken from information available on the NBRC's website ([www.NBRC.org](http://www.NBRC.org)).

## How Long Is My NBRC Credential Valid?

Credentials awarded by the NBRC on or after July 1, 2002 are valid for a period of five years and are subject to the Continuing Competency Program requirements. The re-certification period of five years was adopted to coincide with the NBRC's examination development policy to conduct job analyses approximately every five years to update examination content. The five-year period is calculated from the end of the calendar month in which the credential is issued; an exact expiration date is printed on an individual's credentialing certificate.

## What Is the Continuing Competency Program?

The NBRC's "Continuing Competency Program" (CCP) was enacted for all credentials issued after July 1, 2002. This program requires individuals who earn an NBRC credential (including the CRT, RRT, CPFT, RPFT, NPS, and SDS) to provide evidence they are continuing to meet current standards of practice and have successfully renewed their national credentials issued by the NBRC.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:*** *The Continuing Competency Program is NOT retroactive; therefore, this program does not affect credentials achieved before July 1, 2002. However, if another credential is earned after this date, that credential IS subject to the CCP.*

## How Do I Provide Evidence that I Meet the Current Standards of Practice and Renew My Credential?

There are three ways to satisfy the Continuing Competency Program Requirements:

1. Provide proof of completion of a minimum of 30 hours of Category I Continuing Education (CE) acceptable to the NBRC. Category I Continuing Education is defined as participation in an educational activity directly related to respiratory therapy or pulmonary function technology and may be completed by attending lectures, workshops, seminars, symposiums, panels and distance learning (including web and CD programs).

If an individual holds NBRC credentials in specialty areas (i.e., CPFT, NPS, etc.), some of the required continuing education hours must be completed in topics relating to that specialty. See the NBRC website for a specific breakdown of the requirement.

***NOTE:*** *Individuals can use the same continuing education hours to satisfy state requirements as well as NBRC Continuing Competency Program requirements. Individuals may also use AARC-CRCE credit to fulfill the NBRC Continuing Competency Program requirements.*

OR

2. Re-take and pass the credentialing examination for the highest credential that is subject to the CCP. For example, therapists who hold both the RRT and CRT credential must take the RRT exam (both parts) to satisfy the requirements.

OR

3. Pass an NBRC credentialing examination not previously completed. Passing an NBRC credentialing examination not previously completed automatically extends the renewal period of all of the other credentials held by the certificant for an additional five years, calculated from the date of the successful examination. Therefore, all credentials held by an individual will expire on the same date, allowing future recertification for all credentials held to occur simultaneously.

## Do I Need To Be a Member of the NBRC To Maintain An Active Credential?

No. However, the fee to renew your credential every five years is \$125.00 for non-members. This fee is reduced by \$25 for every year of NBRC membership during the five previous years leading up to the renewal date. So, you can choose to be a member for \$25 a year and pay no credential renewal fee or pay \$125 when it's time to renew your credential.

## What Happens if I Don't Renew My Credential?

If your credential expires, you have six months from the credential expiration date to enter your CEUs online and pay a \$250 reinstatement fee. If you do not renew your credential within the six months following the credential's expiration, you have two years following expiration to apply for testing and to reinstate your credential. You will be required to pay the new application fee and a \$150 expired credential fee. If you pass the examination, your credential will be reinstated without having to meet the then-current admission requirements. However, if two

*continued next page*

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

years lapse and you have not successfully passed the examination, you are required to apply as a new applicant and meet all admission policies in effect at that time.

Individuals who hold an inactive credential from the NBRC may not use the credential or represent themselves as credentialed until such time as the credential is reactivated.

### Can I Work in Pennsylvania If I Don't Have An Active Credential?

Pennsylvania law requires respiratory therapists to have a valid license issued by the State Board of Medicine or Osteopathic Board of Medicine. While it is true that an individual must pass the entry level NBRC examination

(currently the CRT exam), an NBRC credential is NOT required. Therefore, if an individual's credential becomes inactive, they may still legally practice as a respiratory therapist in the Commonwealth for as long as they hold a valid PA RT license to practice.

For more information on the NBRC's Continuing Competency program, go to their document library and download a brochure at the following link:

<http://www.nbrc.org/Home/DocumentLibrary/tabid/57/Default.aspx>

For more information on State Licensure, go to:

[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).

## PSRC Delegate

by Ann M. Wilson, RRT, RPFT, AE-C,  
Advanced Practitioner Respiratory Therapist Director, Camp  
Green Zone PSRC, Junior Delegate



I was truly humbled to be elected in the Fall by the general membership of the PSRC to serve as the Junior Delegate for 2011. What does a delegate do? Well that happens to be a very good question and one that I will be learning more about over the next four years. There is actually a House of Delegates

Handbook that outlines some of what is to be expected. The Junior and Senior Delegates for the PSRC represent Pennsylvania's respiratory therapists at the AARC House of Delegates, AARC HOD, meetings twice a year. Approximately 100 professionals are assembled to perform House of Delegate work. The mission of the AARC HOD is to "serve as a representative body of the general membership and the representative body of the affiliate societies;

to participate in the establishment of goals and objectives for the Association; and to participate in the Governance of the Association."

The delegate must always remember that the fiduciary responsibility of carrying out the goals and objectives of the Association are on the shoulders of the at-large elected officers of the organization and the board of directors. The House of Delegates can and does participate in the governance of the Association without having the ultimate authority to implement all the House recommendations.

The AARC House of Delegates brings together some of the most creative, dynamic individuals in the respiratory care profession. With this collective assembly of professionals sharing quality ideas and practices, we can change the operation of our association to meet the demands of the future.

Stay tuned as I undertake this journey from PSRC Junior Delegate to Senior Delegate over the next four years. I will share some professional insight of the leadership of our profession and the function of the AARC House of Delegates.

## What is AARConnect? by Eileen Censullo MBA, RRT – President Elect for PSRC



It is a social network for AARC members only. Through AARConnect you can:

- **Interact with AARC members** around the world.
- **Have better control and more options with your Discussion Lists** (formerly called listservs). You decide

how to receive postings to Discussion Lists and what email address you want to use.

- **Start discussions of your own**—for fun. Use hobbies as a launch point for a member-created community (that you create!), e.g., baseball, sewing or books.

- **Get your clinical questions** answered in our Help Line.

- **Learn more about the friends** you already know by making them contacts (kind of like friends on *Facebook*).

- **Find old friends**—search by college, city, job setting, name. A robust search feature lets you keep in touch.

- **Conduct committee business with committee members** in a secure environment. If you're on a committee or in a Section or join a Roundtable, you'll find your fellow participants. You control it all. You control how much information others see about you, how you want your emails delivered and how often and what communities you want to belong to. Log on to [www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org) to check it out.

## Update on Continuing Education Requirement

As you likely know, Act 45 and Act 46, which amend the Pennsylvania Medical Practice Act to include the licensing of Respiratory Therapists and other healthcare workers, were signed into law in July, 2008. The primary purpose of the new law was to change RTs from "credentialed" practitioners in the state to "licensed" practitioners. As part of the Governor's "Prescription for Pennsylvania," the new law included an increase in the CEU requirement from 20 hours to 30 hours which is still far below many other healthcare workers including physicians, pharmacists and others and matches the new requirements for nurses in the Commonwealth.

Unfortunately, the signing of these Acts into law is only one part of the process as the law itself only establishes the main requirements. In addition, a set of "regulations" must be written and approved by the governing body to provide the specific details that are not covered by the law itself. In this case, the "governing body" is the State Board of Medicine and Osteopathic Board of Medicine and although regulations were in place, these regulations must to be updated to reflect the wording of the new Acts.

The regulations are where the specific requirements for practitioners are listed including the number CEUs that must be completed at traditional "live" events versus "non-traditional" methods, such as, the internet, journals, etc. In addition, other rules including what types of courses can be used to meet the CEU requirement (approved accreditation, types of courses, etc.) are also found in the regulations.

The State Board of Medicine (SBOM) and Osteopathic Board of Medicine (OBOM) spent most of 2009 addressing the regulations and a draft of the regulations was completed in the late Spring of 2010. The next step in the process is that the draft of the regulations is sent to the state legislators and committees for approval. Once that approval is given, the regulations are printed in the PA Bulletin and a 30 day period for public comment follows. Once THAT is done, all comments received are reviewed by the SBOM and OBOM and additional changes to the regulations may or may not occur and the regulations are finalized and made public.

Unfortunately, part of Act 45 and Act 46 involved changes to the scope of practice for licensed Physician Assistants in the state. These changes have required a lot of time to complete and the process dragged on throughout the summer

and fall of 2010. Since they are part of the same Acts, all of the regulations must be completed and sent to the state legislators all at once and, as of today, the regulations have still not been approved for publication in the PA Bulletin.

The PSRC has contacted the regulatory council for the SBOM and OBOM and they "are hopeful that the regulations requiring a total of 30 hours of CE will be finalized early in the biennial renewal period beginning January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012."

Given the amount of work that has already been done on the regulations, the PSRC believes the regulatory process will conclude in 2011. We are therefore recommending:

1. All licensed Respiratory Therapists plan to complete 30 hours of continuing education during the 2011-2012 licensing period. However, since the regulations are not yet finalized, it is impossible to know for sure how many of the hours will be required to be completed at traditional "live" events. The PSRC has recommended that this requirement NOT be increased and that the current 10 hours per licensing period be maintained. If you are concerned that the regulations will not be completed anytime soon, we recommend you complete a minimum of 20 hours since this will be the default minimum requirement should the unlikely occur and the regulations are not completed in 2011.

2. Since the requirement for one hour in Patient Safety and one hour in Medical Ethics is part of the law and NOT the regulations, Respiratory Therapists must complete these two courses in the 2011-2012 licensing period. There has never been a requirement that these courses be completed via traditional "live" events and this is expected to continue (i.e. these courses can be completed at either a live seminar or online, through a journal, etc.)

As a member of the PSRC, you can rest assured that the PSRC will send out information the moment we learn anything new regarding this process via email to our members. In addition, we will also post new information on the PSRC website ([www.psrc.net](http://www.psrc.net)) as well.

Should you have any questions regarding the regulations, you can contact the PA State Board of Medicine at 717-783-1400 or the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine at 717-783-4858.

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## PSRC Holds Super Bowl Fundraiser!!

The PSRC held it's 2nd Annual PSRC Super Bowl Box Fundraiser. Using a traditional 100-box grid-style pool, PSRC members (along with their friends and families) were offered the chance to donate \$10 to support the PSRC's Sputum Bowl student and practitioner competitions. Each box in the pool represented a 1 in 100 chance of winning a prize. Prizes included three \$25 gift cards and the grand prize of a 16GB iPad! The best part of this fundraiser was that the winners were determined by the score at the end

of each quarter of the Super Bowl while the final score of the game determined who won the Grand Prize!

Congratulations to the winners of the four prizes including:

- ☆ **Carol Ann Kuczma** (\$25 gift card for Olive Garden/Red Lobster/Longhorn Steakhouse)
- ☆ **Monica Decker** (\$25 Wawa gift card)
- ☆ **Carol Robinson** (\$25 Home Depot gift card)
- ☆ **Jennifer Coyle** – *Grand Prize Winner* – 16 GB iPad

PSRC  
c/o 225 Hampshire Drive  
Sellersville, PA 18960

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

Editor, Spring 2011

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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## 2011 PSRC Calendar of Events

March 24, 2011	PSRC Sleep Seminar (York, PA)
April 14-15, 2011	PSRC Eastern Regional Conference (King of Prussia, PA)
April 29, 2011	PSRC NW District Annual Seminar (Erie, PA)
May 18-19, 2011	PSRC NE District Spring Pulmonary Seminar (Wilkes Barre, PA)
June 11, 2011	PSRC/Abington Hospital SE District Seminar (Abington, PA)
June 21, 2011	PSRC Lobby Day (Harrisburg, PA)
June 25, 2011	PSRC/Reading Hospital "News & Views" Seminar (Reading, PA)
July 18-22, 2011	AARC Summer Forum & House of Delegates Meeting (Vail, CO)
Sept. 29-30, 2011	PSRC Western Regional Conference (Pittsburgh, PA)
October 14, 2011	PSRC Conference in the Capital (Harrisburg, PA)
October 25, 2011	PSRC/TJUH 5th Annual RC Week Seminar (Philadelphia, PA)
November 5-8, 2011	AARC International Congress (Tampa, FL)
December 3, 2011	PSRC/Abington Hospital SE District Seminar (Abington, PA)

Check the PSRC website ([www.PSRC.net](http://www.PSRC.net)) for a list of all 2011 PSRC educational event dates which are posted as soon as they are finalized!

