



PTRS NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2004

The newsletter of the Pennsylvania
Therapeutic Recreation Society
www.ptrs.org

Therapeutic Recreation Institute **36th Annual Therapeutic Recreation Institute** **“CELEBRATING OUR PROFESSION”**

June 8 - 11, 2004
Harrisburg/Hershey Holiday Inn
Grantville, PA

June is right around the corner and we hope you've already sent in your registration to attend TRI 2004. We have many exciting educational sessions planned as well as socials and networking opportunities at this year's conference.

An additional session has been added to Wednesday, June 9 which will be Massage Therapy presented by Nancy Stickney at 10:00 a.m.

For all you golfers don't forget about our annual Memorial Golf Open on Tuesday afternoon. Proceeds benefit the Memorial Scholarship funds. Prepare to golf rain or shine we'll have fun either way. We also hope you'll make arrangements to join us for our welcome social to kick off the conference on Tuesday June 8 at 8:00 p.m. Our theme is a Luau so don't forget your "island wear". We'll have refreshments and give aways throughout the night.

As always we'll have our silent auction during the conference. If you or your facility is willing to donate a theme basket please contact Becky Kandrac at (717) 367-1121 ext. 33646. Plan to look forward to lunch on Wednesday when we will give numerous prizes and giveaways for our attendees.

We are eager to see you all again and hope you'll bring a new attendee along with you. If you have not received your registration guide or need additional information please contact the PTRS office at (814) 234-4272. Rooms are filling up fast make your reservation today!



In this Issue...

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As of 1/29/04

**Pennsylvania Therapeutic
Recreation Society
Strategic Plan
Initiatives and Objectives
2001-2005**

Initiatives – 5 years

Objectives – June 2003-2004

Initiative I. Expand Membership Base

Objectives:

- A. Raise professional membership by 10% above the total as of July 2004.
- B. Raise student membership by 5% above the total as of July 2004.

Initiative II. Improve the Quality of Membership Services

Objectives:

- A. Improve communication to membership as evidence by response to website, newsletter and membership survey.
- B. Market mentoring program.

**Initiative III. Improve Continuing Education Opportunities
Relative to the Needs of Our Members**

Objectives:

- A. Provide workshops based on membership needs and interests.
- B. Complete PTRS workshop guidelines by September 7, 2001.
- achieved year 2002
- C. Reach targeted financial goal per PRPS 2001-2002 Budget.
achieved 2002-2003
- D. Continually obtain and evaluate interests of our members relative to professional services offered which include educational topics, mentoring and consultation.
- E. Guarantee professional appearance of educational materials.

**Initiative IV. Strengthen Advocacy with Legislators,
Governmental Officials and Interested Citizens**

Objectives:

- A. Revise and update position statements by November 2003.
- B. Schedule, plan and facilitate a "Day on the Hill" at the state level in 2003.
- C. Implement a monitoring system of state and legislative issues.

Prepared by
Kirk S. Rakos, PTRS President
PTRS Board

Date of origin June 2001
Revised June 3, 2003

Spring has arrived at least I think so. After a late snow in early April and then 85 degrees (I had to have the air conditioner on in the car) two weeks later I am a little confused. I am sure spring is here since we received our 2004 TRI registration guide and I was asked to write this message for the spring newsletter.

As you read the spring edition of the PTRS newsletter you will find that the society has been busy over the winter in an effort to meet your needs as a member and uphold the mission. Some notes of interest regarding PTRS are as follows:

New and updated website address www.ptrs.org
Bookmark as a favorite and let us know what you think and how we can improve the site

Two adhoc committees have been formed to explore

A. Improvement of the Therapeutic Recreation Institute to meet the needs of professionals in Therapeutic Recreation, market to other professionals, increase attendance, etc.

Chair: Fred Walters, CTRS

B. Restructuring of the PTRS Board format (see additional information in the board meeting update of this edition)

Chair: Mary Ann Bellfy, CTRS

Results of the membership survey indicate that PTRS is a strong society who for the most part is meeting the needs of our members. Check out the results on the website www.ptrs.org after May 10th. The board has reviewed the results and has incorporated a plan of action into the society's strategic plan. The initial outcome is the continuing education opportunity titled "Start to Finish" Development and Implementation of Sensory Stimulation Program which is being offered in each of the six regions across our state (check the website for details relative to date and location in your region).

Do not forget to register for the 36th annual TRI being held June 8th-11th so we can celebrate our profession together as a society.

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

Sincerely



PTRS President

PTRS Newsletter is published by the Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Society. The newsletter editor is Jenn Koehler. PTRS is a branch of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, Inc. Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Society, 2131 Sandy Drive, State College, PA 16803-2283, (814) 234-4272; Fax: (814) 234-5276; www.ptrs.org

JAMES E. VAN ZANDT VA MEDICAL CENTER'S BEST PRACTICE VETERANS' VICTORY GARDEN

by Jean-Marie Walter

The James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center in Altoona, PA established the Veterans' Victory Garden six years ago. It has recently been selected by VA Central Office as one of the best six Outcome Based Practices in Recreation Therapy. The Recreation Therapy staff, Frederick C. Walter, CTRS Coordinator, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Services and Jean-Marie A. Walter, CTRS Recreation Therapist has also been selected to be part of the Outcomes-Based Practices in Recreation Therapy Service Workgroup in Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office, Washington, DC.

The Veterans' Victory Garden is on grounds at this facility; it was designed by Recreation Therapy and the Manager of Facilities. The garden consists of concrete sidewalks that have gradual grades, turns and curves to equal approximately 200yards for ambulating, an evergreen oval, a fruit tree oval, perennial borders, berry patches, vegetable garden, raised beds and planters of annuals, a water garden, a small rose garden, fountain, benches, and two pavilions for outside treatments. Treatments include balance; fine and gross motor skills, sensory stimulation, transfer training, education in adaptive leisure skills as well as providing co-treatments with Physical and Occupational Therapies.

Outcome Based Practice results include:

1. Improved relaxation with blood pressures dropped and or maintained within normal limits after 10 minutes of gardening/adaptive gardening
2. Pulses decreased in rate by 5% within the first 20 minutes of treatment.
3. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease patients showed moderate decrease in labored breathing and anxiety. (Formal observation, pulse oximetry, will be completed with the assistance of Respiratory Therapy)

The Veterans' Victory Garden has brought a unique way for this medical center to meet &/or exceed JCAHO standards relating to the delivery of Recreation Therapy and Environment of Care. JCAHO surveyors were impressed by the availability of the garden for treatment for residents and families as well as meeting the needs for available outside controlled environment.

The garden has also incorporated community awareness to the VA and working with other non-profit organizations (Pond Keepers, Master Gardeners Programs) for the sole purpose of providing quality care to our nations veterans.

Both the local TV station and the newspaper provided coverage when the water garden/pond was being installed with follow up on the day of the grand opening.

Penn State Recreation Therapy interns have had the opportunity to be involved in this project providing them sources for planning and practicing adaptive garden techniques. Interns have been instrumental in the planning phase as well as recognizing and planning improvements to better meet the needs of our veterans. The garden has present an area in which Recreation Therapy in this facility has extended it performance and quality improvement in the treatment of veterans.

Residents/Patients and families have both enjoyed the garden for treatment, privacy and family gatherings. The community has enjoyed the garden as a quiet area to enjoy the seasonal changes.

JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Recreation Therapist - Liberty Healthcare Corporation seeks Recreation Therapists/Phys. Ed. Instructors to join our newest residential treatment center for young adults located in Torrance, PA (45 miles east of Pittsburgh). Responsibilities include planning, organizing and directing leisure and recreational activities. Experience in a psychiatric/correctional setting preferred. The position offers competitive compensation, full benefits, paid time-off, and 401(k) plan. For immediate consideration please contact Yehudis Herzka at (888) 439-1440 or (610) 668-8800. Fax resume to (610) 668-7689 or e-mail yehudisg@libertyhealth.com <<mailto:yehudisg@libertyhealth.com>>. Visit our website at www.libertyhealthcare.com <<http://www.libertyhealthcare.com>>.

Recreation Therapist - Philadelphia Nursing Home, Philadelphia, PA. Full-time position. Competitive salaries, an excellent benefit package, including 3 weeks vacation, full health insurance benefits and tuition reimbursement. Interest candidates can call, send or fax resume to: Ann C. Durant, M.Ed. CTRS, Director of Recreation Therapy ELTC/Philadelphia Nursing Home, 2100 W. Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19130 Phone: (215) 685-0800 ext. 1329 Fax: (215) 685-0975

Additional Highlights from March 2004 Board Meeting

An adhoc committee has been formed to develop roles and responsibilities for PTRS board positions which reflect a new format that is being considered for implementation over the next year.

The Executive committee of PTRS will remain intact which includes the position of President, President-Elect, Past-President, Recording Secretary and Membership Secretary. The remainder of the board will consist of three district representatives and three members at large. The three districts will equate to the three districts currently used by PRPS to divide the state. The three district representatives and members at large will represent the members of PTRS and the citizens of Pennsylvania on issues which the board is addressing.

The society will create a resource network which will include the various populations we work with who receive therapeutic recreation treatment and services. Individuals who will form this network will have a strong passion for their work and the population they work with but do not desire to serve on a board. PTRS will eventually offer this resource network as part of the vision which PRPS has to create an institute at the PRPS office featuring the various branches of the organization.

The Executive Committee of the PTRS board will be hosting a society hour on Wednesday, June 9th at the Holiday Inn Grantville during the TRI beginning at 5:45 pm with light refreshments being served. Check at the TRI registration desk for location.

During this time the future initiatives of the society will be discussed which will include the new board format and how the format will enhance services, connect our branch more closely with our parent organization PRPS as well as enhance and maintain involvement of our members in PTRS.

Please visit the PTRS website at www.ptrs.org to keep abreast of the happenings of your society. The board members want to know your opinion so we encourage you to use the bulletin board to ask questions, share comments and ideas about what is happening around you in your profession and PTRS.

Adaptive Skiing, Conquering the Mountain *by Leah Workinger*

This winter 10 residents from the Margaret E. Moul Home had the once in their lifetime experience of adaptive skiing at Ski Liberty. With the help of Easter Seals and the volunteers of Allegheny Ski Club our residents were transported out of their developmental limitations to the freedom of the open slopes.

The residents were filled with excitement, nervous butterflies and anticipation of this event. The Therapeutic Recreation Department provided transportation to the slopes, emotional support, encouragement, transfer from wheelchair to ski chair and video and camera documentation.

After being transported to the adaptive ski chair, the volunteers took over, adjusting their positions to fit snug in the ski, fitting them with goggles and helmets and strapping them in tight. Then it was on to the ski lift, a another once in a life time experience.

At the top of the hill they began their graceful weaving down the mountain. With a volunteer guiding their ski from the back and another volunteer watching closely beside them, we saw nervous butterflies turn into beautiful smiles.

The volunteers were wonderful at allowing the residents to be as independent as possible. Even though most of our residents were unable to use the adaptive arm poles to help them balance, they encouraged the residents to be in charge of their decent down the slopes. With a movement of their arms or a turn of their head they told the ski support volunteer which direction to turn.

Most of the residents came back from this experience ready for more extreme sports. They requested photos of their ski trip to show their families and friends proof of something most people didn't think was possible. On to bigger and better things...we've already conquered the mountain.

**Please Note
The PTRS website address has
changed www.ptrs.org
is our new address visit us for
information regarding
workshops, conferences,
awards & membership
information.**

Adaptive Games

by Catherine A. Bowers, C.T.R.S.

After working in the Long Term Care for twenty (20) years, I have learned that you can learn or implement fun activities for the population that you work with at your facility. It usually takes a little planning, the proper supplies, and the right environment to implement and conduct enjoyable activities for your group.

One of my favorite activity games is volleyball. I have learned to adapt this game for my physically challenged population (I.E. arthritic clients, clients with cerebral palsy, clients with other physical problems). When setting up for this activity, I will push three long tables together, and I will place any wheel chair bound participants around the table because it is easier for them to play. I will also use a balloon filled with a mixture of helium and oxygen, instead of a ball, because it is easier for some physically challenged clients to hit the balloon. Depending on the participant's physical condition, a punch ball may be used instead of a balloon. (Added Tip: Be careful of the balloon or punch ball that is used because some participants may have a Latex Allergy. If a participant is allergic to Latex, you will obviously need to find a ball made from non-latex materials).

Another fun game is what I call "Duster Ball". The materials needed for this game are: three long tables, a Nerf Ball, and long dusters that can be purchased at your local Doll & Store. Place the three long tables together, station your participants around the table, and instruct your participants to hit the ball so that it will travel from one side of the table to the other. I often tell my participants / residents that the Housekeeping Department needs help dusting the tables, and our group is helping out. I also find that playing music while doing this activity seems to be more enjoyable for the participants. Some of the participants seem to "really get into it" (the activity).

Planning activities in Long Term Care can always be challenging. It helps if you enjoy your work because the task of planning will become the joy of planning. When planning activities for your participants, it's good to keep things simple so that both you and your participants will enjoy the activity.

Catherine

Meet Heather Erno, CTRS

If you find yourself trotting across Adams county in PA you might run into Heather at the Hoffman Homes where she is the Coordinator of the Therapeutic Horsemanship Program. Heather started this program from the ground up and states the goal of the program is to help give her emotionally and behaviorally troubled youth the opportunity to trust and care for another living being. Heather accomplishes this by first allowing her kids to be involved in "group work" or grooming, the anatomy of the horse, and working as part of a team. The kids in the program can then progress to riding the horse if they demonstrate competency in the groups work and work as a good team member. Heather states her job at the Hoffman Homes is intrinsically rewarding especially when she can see increased self esteem, smiles, and seeing her kids develop a bond with the horse.

Heather became interested in this field because she loves animals and kids, and states she has the best of both worlds!

Heather currently serves on the board of PTRS as the Pediatric and Adolescent specialty representative. She also serves on the PA council on Therapeutic Horsemanship, and was an adjunct professor at Wilson College in their Equine Facilitated Therapeutics (FFT) program.

On her days off she enjoys riding her horse Giovanni, walking her dog Lexi and spending time with her family. Heather enjoys Chubby Hubby icecream, vacationing in Outerbanks, NC, country music, and driving her "Black Stallion" Dodge Ram.

Thank you Heather for serving youth at Hoffman Homes and for being our member spotlight!



Heather and Giovanni

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Coming soon!
“Celebrate our Profession!”
2004 Therapeutic Recreation
Institute
June 7-11, 2004
Harrisburg/Hershey Holiday Inn
Grantville, PA

Please send your registrations in now before it's too late!