



## Sound Expressions

A Quarterly Publication

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**John Lowe, III**  
2008 ArkSHA President



Welcome to the 1st ArkSHA Newsletter from your new Board. You can review the new Board members on our Website. We are making the transition to a new year, reconstituting committees, establishing at least one new one, and preparing an agenda for this year.

The Board will be meeting on the following dates: February 29, April 18, June 27, August 22, and December 12. We will also meet at the ArkSHA Convention. If there are issues you want the Board to consider, or if you have suggestions, send them to any Board member a week before the next meeting.

I am very pleased to announce that we hired Martha Perry to be our Lobbyist. She has considerable experience in working with legislators, and comes highly recommended by people familiar with her work. She will monitor legislation that could affect speech and hearing issues, and guide us in legislative initiatives that we may pursue.

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### Lobbyist, Martha Perry Joins ArkSHA Team



As the new lobbyist for ArkSHA in the 2008 Interim Period and the 2009 legislative session, I am learning about your organization, the services its members provide, and the issues that concern you. Therefore, it seems only fair that I should tell you something about myself.

My background is in politics and government. I worked for US Senator Dale Bumpers for 28 years, both when he was Governor and in his D. C. and State Senate offices. After his retirement from the Senate, I was the Arkansas Director for a national non-profit and have been lobbying since the 2005 session of the Arkansas Legislature. Some of my other clients include the Arkansas Nurses Association; the Arkansas School Food Services Association; Advocates for Arkansas Public Libraries, and the Arkansas Dietetic Association. I have also lobbied at the national level for the Arkansas Hunger Coalition and the Advocates for Arkansas Children and Families.

I have a personal interest in the work that ArkSHA does because my brother is a Speech Pathologist (in South Carolina) and my son spent many of his pre-school & grade school years making weekly visits to his speech path.

Earlier this month I met with your President, John Lowe; Carol Fleming, the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on SLP Salary Supplement, and Nancy and Randy Martinsen to discuss the salary supplement issue. Because Arkansas legislators are always interested in what our border states are doing on various issues, I've asked Carol to get comparisons on base salaries and bonus pay from those states.

*Lobbyist* continued on page 3

**ArkSHA 2007  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**ArkSHA MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide leadership, professional development, and quality membership services for audiologists and speech-language pathologists; to serve as the catalyst for innovative practices in prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of communication, hearing, balance, and swallowing disorders; and to advocate for the provision of quality programs and services and for the rights of people with communication hearing, balance, and swallowing disorders.

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And  
Audiology**

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**Arkansas Medicaid Website**  
[www.medicaid.state.ar.us](http://www.medicaid.state.ar.us)

**Arkansas Department of Education**  
(501) 682-4475  
[www.arkedu.state.ar.us](http://www.arkedu.state.ar.us)

**Arkansas Department of Health**  
(501) 661-2328

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**President** continued from page 1

The ArkSHA By-Laws establish certain committees, such as the Membership Committee, with the President-Elect serving as the Chair. There are also provisions for ad-hoc committees (not "task forces"), and these are required to dissolve on December 31 of each year. What has been called the Task Force on the Salary Supplement Initiative will be reconstituted as the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Salary Supplement for School Speech-Language Pathologists. (If someone can create an acronym from that, it would save a lot of auditory and print space.)

I've asked Carol Fleming to Chair this Ad-Hoc Committee. She was the ArkSHA President when this issue was started, has worked with legislators, and has related experience with the Council of State Association Presidents. She will form a small advisory group that will work closely with Martha Perry to coordinate all lobbying activities with the larger Committee and other ArkSHA members. If you have any ideas or opportunities to influence legislation in our favor, send it to Carol so her Advisory Group can assure that our efforts are well-organized and cohesive. We don't want to have two or three members approaching legislators on their own, as that can wear out our welcome and lead to mixed messages. We certainly encourage your participation, so let Carol know of contacts that you could initiate.

We also need to coordinate activities related to Medicaid. Therefore, I've asked Jeff Adams to Chair an Ad-Hoc Committee on Medicaid issues. We have members representing us on Medicaid task forces, and we need to be sure to speak as one voice on reimbursement and other important matters.

A particularly important issue is the size of our membership. We simply need to bring in a larger portion of the Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in this state. It helps with all of the activities of the Association, and it certainly helps when legislators ask what proportion of those in our professions are members. It would increase our influence, our chances for success in legislative initiatives, if our membership were larger. I hope you will encourage colleagues who are not members, to join us -- we need them. Remind them that we are all part of the political process, whether we want to be or not -- and if we don't participate, it simply means that others make decisions for us and about issues important to us. Hopefully, they will also find professional stimulation, continuing education offerings, networking opportunities, and many other benefits.

Do check out the rest of this Newsletter, and keep in mind that the Website has additional information, such as the Directory of ArkSHA members. For those who like to look ahead, maybe note important dates on a calendar, our Annual Convention will be in Hot Springs again, October 8-10.

John Lowe III  
2008 ArkSHA President

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**Lobbyist** continued from page 1

A list compiled in October, 2007, shows that Louisiana passed a graduated bonus program but, like our bonus in Arkansas, it was unfunded; a \$6,000 salary supplement in Mississippi; \$5,000 in Oklahoma; and Missouri passed a bill putting licensed and certified SLPs on 'the highest level of the Department of Education 's career advancement ladder. (No mention of bonus money in the synopsis I read.)

I know it is frustrating for ArkSHA members to have passed your salary supplement bill in 2005, only to see it remain unfunded. Funding the supplement would cost \$2.5 million annually, a small sum in some respects, but because costs in general are increasing, revenues are going down, and because the Governor is hoping to eliminate the final half of the sales tax, general revues are going to be tight.

I have had one meeting with a member of the Governor's staff on the SLP issue. They are aware of the issue and have requested additional information, which Carol Fleming is researching. Although we are 10-plus months away from the start of the '09 session both the Governor and Legislative leaders are already gathering information, making decisions and setting priorities, and we want to have our funding proposal on the table. We will also want to employ a thoughtful and reasonable lobbying effort, and that means working as a team and always being respectful not only of the public officials we deal with, but also of the fact that they have many issues before them and hard decisions to make.

My contact information is: 501-280-0475. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at any time. I'm looking forward to our achieving much-deserved success for the members of ArkSHA.

# Medicaid Rate Increase Update

Jeff Adams

Many Arkansas speech-language pathologists who provide therapy services to Medicaid recipients are very curious about the proposed rate change for therapy services. It is important for the membership to know that ArkSHA is represented in the rate increase negotiations with AROTA, ARPTA, and Medicaid officials. Recent taskforce discussions have focused on when the proposed rate change (an expected increase of 20% for all three therapies) will occur. Some important prerequisites to the rate change have been met including the required public announcement (see below) to amend the State Plan. This notice appeared in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette on December 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of 2007. The next big hurdle is for the State Plan Amendment to be approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). This plan has to be submitted to CMS by March 1, 2008. CMS will then review (and hopefully accept) the plan amendments within ninety days. What this means to providers is that when approved and put into effect (estimated to be around June 1, 2008), the rate increase will be retroactive for effective dates of service back to January 1, 2008. The pay-for-performance component for quality improvement will be implemented in 2009. If you have any questions pertaining to the Medicaid rate increase, please feel free to email Jeff Adams at [jadams@uca.edu](mailto:jadams@uca.edu).

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to one or more of the following Arkansas Codes, 20-76-201(13), 20-10-211(a), 20-10-203(b), 20-76-433, 20-77-102, 20-77-107, 20-77-603, 25-10-129, the Director of the Division of Medical Services hereby issues the following proposed changes in the Medical Assistance Program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act:

Effective for dates of service occurring on and after January 1, 2008, the Arkansas Department of Human Services will increase the Medicaid maximum reimbursement rates for physical therapy (excluding Home Health Program physical therapy), occupational therapy and speech therapy services by 20%.

Effective also January 1, 2008, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy providers with the exception of Home Health Program providers and providers that are operated by the Arkansas State Operated Teaching Hospital are eligible to receive an annual Quality Incentive (QI) payment. The total of all QI payments to qualifying therapy providers will not exceed an annual maximum of \$425,000. QI payments will be reimbursed based on the number of passing scores of a Medicaid on-line therapy test given to Arkansas licensed therapists associated with the enrolled therapy providers. Providers that do not have at least one associated enrolled therapist who passes the on-line test will not receive a QI payment. All QI payments will be paid by June 30th.

The rate increases and new QI payments are being implemented in order to ensure the availability of therapy services for Arkansas Medicaid beneficiaries. The Department estimates a budget impact increase of \$7,300,000 for the remaining 6 months during State Fiscal Year 2008 and a budget impact increase of \$15,600,000 for the 12 month period of State Fiscal Year 2009 to implement these proposed reimbursement changes.

The Arkansas Department of Human Services is in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act and is operated, managed and delivers services without regard to religion, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, age, race, color or national origin.

# ASHA SEAL

February 2008

## Report to ArkSHA Members

Kay Hall, MS, CCC-SLP ASHA SEAL, AR

1. The Division 16 of ASHA has now approved a standing committee for the purpose of informing school-based speech-language pathologists about the *Professional Performance Review Process (PPRP) for the school-based speech-language pathologist*. The PPRP is available on-line at [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org). They will speak to your groups for a fee. Contact [pbschrae@wisc.edu](mailto:pbschrae@wisc.edu).
2. Many speech-language pathologists and teachers are receiving a survey from The Educational Testing Service (ETS) conducting a job analysis survey as part of a review process for an existing Praxis examination in *Teaching Speech to Students with Language Impairments*, which has been in use since 1980. This certification if they pass is currently available in three states: Maine, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. If you are asked to complete this survey, ASHA has requested that under the additional comments, you put the following information:

*“While teachers are encouraged to acquire an understanding of the foundations of communication and the developmental and educational considerations relevant to school-aged children with communication disorders in order to meet the educational needs of their students and to effectively collaborate with other professionals (i.e. speech-language) in serving this population, it is not within the purview of teachers to identify, assess or treat children with speech-language impairments, address the multicultural variables associated with communication differences or disorders; counsel about communication impairments; or serve on IFSP and IEP teams to provide team input about the eligibility, program or placement recommendations of students with communication impairments. The knowledge and skills associated with these responsibilities are best represented by the speech-language pathologist.”*

Your completion of this job survey will assist ASHA with its advocacy efforts on behalf of the profession of speech-language pathology.

3. Please be aware that Rhode Island has passed standards stating that children ages 9 and above will no longer be able to receive speech only services. For children 9 and older speech is a related service only and cannot stand alone. This is a critical issue in our field. This would have huge impact on services that our students need and would not be able to receive. Please be aware of this standard in other states and help us be aware and make sure similar standards do not come to Arkansas.

# Audiology Committee Gearing Up

**Frank Olinde**  
Vice President  
Audiology and Hearing Services



In the dead of winter, it is difficult to think about new projects. Cold and cloudy days tend to make me think of pulling up the covers and going back to sleep...till April or so. But life goes on despite the weather and I did notice a couple of crocus sprouts in the yard, so spring can't be far off. Speaking of spring, the audiology committee will be meeting for the first time in 2008 the week of March 3rd. We have two main topics for this meeting. The first will be to discuss the ArkSHA convention. A featured speaker needs to be selected. I have emailed audiologists around

Arkansas in an effort to gather a good list of potential speakers. If you have any suggestions or favorite speakers, please email or call me. We'd love to have your input.

The second item for discussion involves services provided to disabled citizens via the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services program. The AR Rehabilitation program is a state program that is charged with providing services to adults in an effort ensure that they are able to prepare for and enter the workforce. I have received reports from audiologists that services to the hearing impaired from the AR Rehabilitation program has been inconsistent across counties. Specifically, the reports state that individuals with similar social situations and degrees of hearing loss are receiving widely disparate degrees of support with regards to granting approval for hearing aids and other amplification devices. Let me say that, at this time, we have not even begun to investigate these reports, so I am making no claims regarding the work done by the AR Rehabilitation program. But, we as audiologists and as ArkSHA members are committed to advocating for the hearing impaired, so we'll investigate.

I encourage everyone in the audiology community to get in touch with me if you have any suggestions or concerns regarding audiology in the state of Arkansas.



# 2008 ArkSHA CONVENTION

## CALL FOR PAPERS / PRESENTER INFO / MODERATORS

The Program Committee will use this information to review and select quality programs for the 2008 ArkSHA Convention  
October 9-10, 2008 - Hot Springs Convention Center

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STUDENT PRESENTATION</b>
PRESENTATION TITLE (maximum of 10 words): <hr/>	

**PROFESSIONAL PRESENTERS** must submit the following by email:

- Narrative Abstract (50 to 75 words) - to be used in the Convention Program
- Brief Bio - to be used in the Convention Program
- Current Resume
- Minimum of 3 Learning Objectives

For presentations with multiple presenters, a separate form with all information must be submitted for each presenter

Mail this form to: [ArkSHA, P.O. Box 250261, Little Rock, AR 72225](#) or FAX to (501) 244-2333

**AND**

Email attachments to: [arksha@arksha.org](mailto:arksha@arksha.org)  
Please send in Microsoft Word format with an email subject line saying "ArkSHA Speaker"

SPECIFY:  1 Hour Mini-Seminar       2 hr Mini-Seminar Other       Other

**STUDENT PRESENTERS** must submit a narrative abstract of 50 to 75 words.

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form to: [ArkSHA, P.O. Box 250261, Little Rock, AR 72225](#) or FAX to (501) 244-2333

**AND**

Email attachments to: [arksha@arksha.org](mailto:arksha@arksha.org)  
Please send in Microsoft Word format with an email subject line saying "ArkSHA Speaker"

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE STUDENT RESEARCH FORUM ON FRIDAY 10/10/2008**

### DEADLINE FOR ALL PRESENTER APPLICATIONS - MAY 1, 2008

**MODERATOR** - Moderators are responsible for introducing presenters, helping with handouts, and distributing CEU/CPE information. *Please ask a friend to moderate your presentation and complete the information below:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SLP    A    A/SLP    CCC    Ph.D.    Ed.D.    Circle All That Apply

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

# 2008 ArkSHA Convention Under Construction

Kim McCullough  
Vice President  
Continuing Education



The **2008 ArkSHA Convention** is scheduled for October 9-10<sup>th</sup> in Hot Springs. Additionally, we will begin early registration and have one session on Wednesday night the 8<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme is **"Building Bridges through Communication."** The program committee is working hard to invite a variety of speakers and present programming that covers numerous areas of interest. We will be selecting sessions that we hope will both expand and bridge your knowledge of evidence-based practice and clinical application. In keeping with our theme, I also encourage members to submit presentation proposals that help to bridge the gap between our knowledge and application.

I hope you all have noticed the artwork selected for this year's convention. This piece was created by an Arkansas artist and architect, **Jeff Horton**.



When selecting the convention theme I immediately thought about Jeff's work. This is how he describes it - "The lines and space in the paintings are constantly blurring the boundaries by intertwining with each other. One line becomes dependent on another and influences the position of all the other lines. Lines in my paintings also work with color. Colors create harmony and define interior spaces, compliment and compete with each other." Jeff's description of his paintings is often how I feel about my own work as a speech-language pathologist. I hope you enjoy Jeff's piece and use it as a time to reflect on your own clinical *art*.

As in the past, this year's convention promises to provide an enriching educational experience that audiologists and speech-language pathologists should find exciting and rewarding, regardless of their practice setting. If you are interested in volunteering to help with the Convention please contact me at [kmccullo@uca.edu](mailto:kmccullo@uca.edu).