

# Pulmonary Press

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## ISRC Wins Rising Star Award

The Bloomington Convention Center annually bestows the Rising Star Award to a select few organizations in recognition of their convention activities in Bloomington. Criteria for the award include the geographic diversity of the attendees, the organization's working relationship with the convention center, and the overall theme and presentation of the meeting.

The ISRC recently received this honor for our September, 2006 convention "TWISTER – Back in Bloomington."



*ISRC President Mary Todd, center, and Jan Johnson, right, accept the Rising Star Award from Michelle Stapleton of the Bloomington Convention Center.*

## Message from the President

I spent March 17th-19th in Grapevine, Texas at a leadership meeting held by the AARC for the state leaders. This was the second year I was able to attend and it is an informative action packed meeting.

There were three main topics at the meeting this year: Government

Indiana  
Society for  
Respiratory  
Care



Affairs, Public Relations, and Membership.

Cheryl West, Miriam O'Day, and Frank Salvatore spoke at length on legislative updates impacting each state and reported on the great success of the PACT meeting.

Dr. James Kiley, Director, Division of Lung Diseases with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute spoke on the new COPD campaign....Learn More, Breathe Better: A Nationwide Campaign on COPD and how we as RT's can raise awareness on COPD. COPD has become the 4th leading cause of death and COPD mortality has continued to rise.

In the afternoon we broke up into four groups and went through assigned exercises to plan events for public relations and educate the public on our profession. Tom Lamphere, AARC Membership Chairman, spoke to us about ways to increase and retain AARC members. He gave us several good ideas. We need to remember that we need to keep our membership strong to keep our profession strong. There is strength in numbers.

Monday we boarded a bus and went to the AARC Office. It is such a great opportunity to go to the office and meet all the people that keep the AARC functioning. This was especially exciting for me because the quilt I made and presented to the AARC is now hanging in the office on display.

Just a reminder...May 2nd is Asthma Awareness Day.

# Legislative Update

By Mark Scherer

The Indiana General Assembly has completed action on bills in the second chamber. For a bill to become law, it must pass both its house of origin (House of Representatives or Senate) and then the other chamber. If a bill passes both chambers with the exact same language, it then goes straight to the Governor for his approval, veto, or inaction (which allows the bill to become law without his signature). If, however, a bill passes both chambers with different language, the bill goes to a conference committee where legislators from each chamber attempt to reconcile the differing versions to produce a single version. Their conference committee report must be approved by each chamber before the bill goes to the Governor.

Conference committees this year began April 12 and go through the end of session, April 29, the date established in law by which the General Assembly must adjourn. If any issues remain undecided, such as the budget, the Governor has the authority to call the General Assembly back for a Special Session.

At this point in the session, as in most sessions, the major issues remain undecided. These include the budget, full day kindergarten, property tax relief, the proposed new health care plan, slot machines at horse tracks and funding for highways.

Both the Governor and the House Democrats had plans this year to provide health insurance coverage for low income Hoosiers who can't afford to buy their own insurance but who don't qualify for Medicaid. Both the Governor and the House Democrats proposed to fund this initiative with a 25 cents per pack increase in the cigarette tax. However, despite having enough votes to pass, the House plan failed because it was not perceived that bi-partisan support was as strong as it could be. The Governor's plan is poised to pass the House but without the cigarette tax to fund it. It is anticipated that the cigarette tax will be added to another bill, perhaps in an even larger amount since many legislators believe that it should be increased to as much as \$1 per pack. Stay tuned to see how this issue is resolved.

Keep in mind that legislators won't know your opinions unless you make the modest effort necessary to contact them, so let them know what matters to you as a citizen and as a respiratory care practitioner.

If you want to express an opinion on a bill or an issue, the General Assembly has established a web site for you to contact them as follows: <http://www.in.gov/legislative/contact/index.html>.

If you don't know the names of your legislators, you can find them at this web site: <http://www.in.gov/apps/sos/legislator/search/>.

# PACT Meeting

By Pat Ingle

On March 6th, 2007, Indiana participated in the AARC's Political Advocacy Contact Team (PACT) meeting in Washington, D.C. I had the honor of representing the ISRC, as well as the AARC, along with 114 other members of the PACT Team nationwide. We visited our U.S. Senators and Representatives, or their staffers, on Capital Hill in Washington, DC.

I was able to visit to the offices of Rep. Mark Souder – Indiana 3rd, Rep. Steve Buyer – Indiana 4th, Rep. Julia Carson – Indiana 7th, Rep. Barron Hill – Indiana 9th, Rep. Brad Ellsworth – Indiana 8th, Rep. Mike Pence – Indiana 6th, and Sen. Richard Lugar. Our mission was to share information on four topics:

1. Gathering support for bills pending in Congress to require national Medicare coverage for pulmonary rehabilitation
2. Repeal the requirement that turns ownership of home oxygen equipment over to the Medicare beneficiary after 36 months of rental
3. Join the COPD Caucus
4. The New Medicare Initiative that will allow Respiratory Therapists with an RRT and a bachelor's degree to deliver respiratory Care Services without the physical being present when the services are provided in physician offices and clinics.

I had some good meetings with legislative staffers; most were open and asked good questions about the issues we presented. Legislative staffers are starting to connect Respiratory Therapy to issues. The past two years I have had two staffers request my input on two issues we did not have on our radar, but could potentially affect us. After returning to Indiana, I have contacted all the staffers via e-mail and plan to contact them throughout the year, just to keep connected.

My next steps are to set up visits to every US Representative and US Senator, either by myself, but hopefully with members of the ISRC that live in their districts. I need your help to do this. If anyone lives in any of the Congressional Districts and is willing to meet with your US Congressional Representative, please let me know via e-mail at [pingle@in-isrc.org](mailto:pingle@in-isrc.org).

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## Upcoming events

ISRC Chapter 3 – June 12, 2007  
at Saint Joseph Hospital – Kokomo  
**6 CEUs**

Contact Susan VonTobel for details  
[www.svontobel@in-isrc.org](http://www.svontobel@in-isrc.org)

# Indiana Society for Respiratory Care



## 2007 Board of Director's Meetings

*May 11, 2007*  
Ivy Tech - Lawrence Campus  
Indianapolis

*September 19, 2007*  
Radisson Hotel City Centre  
Indianapolis

*November 16, 2007*  
Ivy Tech - Lawrence Campus  
Indianapolis

**AARC Summer Forum**  
**July 13-15, 2007**  
**Reno Nevada**

**Visit [www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org)**  
**for details**

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