

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A year ago, I wrote my first President's Message to our membership. Little did I know, because of a rapidly changing public health crisis, I would address our members four times in a month with COVID-19 updates. APTA proved to be a trusted source of information and guidance, as hits on the APTA website, [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org), increased dramatically. Our world changed and none of us will likely forget the year that is in our rear-view mirror. All of us have experienced these events in our own way and lessons came in many forms. I learned that Zoom meetings can only go so far and there is no substitute for authentic person to person interaction, on all levels. I was reminded of the fulfilling nature of our work as caregivers and the joy of losing ourselves in helping others reach their goals and improve their lives. We have our lifetime to reminisce; but now, after a yearlong pandemic, intense racial strife, social isolation, political upheaval, and economic stress, let's look forward. Through the miracles of immunological science, on March 9, 2021, Alaska opened up vaccinations to all persons over 16 years old.



APTA is 100 years old this year. In January of 1921, Mary McMillan and other founders met at Keen's Chophouse in New York City and formed The Women's Physical Therapeutic Association, what is now the American Physical Therapy Association. Dues were set at \$2/year. A year later, the name was changed to The American Physiotherapy Association. The Centennial started with Founders Day celebration, but there is lots more to come. Take advantage of the excellent programming and classes planned for this year with the [APTA Centennial Lecture Series](#). The Centennial Gala will be in Washington, DC on September 10, 2021.

APTA Alaska Membership has taken a hit this year. We had a solid goal of reaching 500 members in 2020, but lost members for the first time in many years. COVID collateral damage. If there are things we can do to serve you better, we want to know. If you have a PT or PTA colleague who is on the fence about joining, please have them contact me, [aleckay@aptaalaska.org](mailto:aleckay@aptaalaska.org), so I can explain how APTA helps our profession, the community, and how we really are better together.

Obviously, COVID collateral damage is immeasurable. Last month, an article was published that described the "[pandemic within the pandemic](#)". This study involved 14 countries and found an over 20% decrease in people meeting the World Health Organization's recommendations for physical activity. The fallout from that alone is right in our wheelhouse and we are poised to help the recovery of the public at large. APTA has released a Public Service Announcement (PSA) on how physical activity improves health and quality of life. You can watch the PSA [HERE](#).

To end, I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to recognize a career achievement of one of our exceptional APTA Alaska members. This Spring, Hal Egbert will have practiced physical therapy for 50 years. That is impressive, but certainly not unprecedented or the amazing part of his story. Hal has worked directly in patient care, many of the decades, for over 60 hours a week, even when functioning as a manager. There's more... Hal has spent every day, year, decade, trying to get better at helping patients. He has worked tirelessly on everything related to patient care and continues to this day. He is a model of commitment and sacrifice of hours, nights, and weekends, putting in the work, diligently, to learn more and more. You can search the state, country, and world and still may be hard pressed to find a physical therapist who has helped as many patients in their lifetime. Hal is a treasure among us.

Enjoy the quickly increasing light and majesty of Alaska. I hope to see you at the April meeting and Spring Conference.

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