

Massage Therapists Receive Warm Welcome At Olympics

Massage therapy's growing acceptance throughout the world was never more evident than at the recent Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Approximately 250 therapists, both AMTA and non-AMTA members, volunteered their time throughout the 17-day-long event, which ran from February 8 to February 24.

Massage therapists also were expected to be present at the 2002 Paralympic Winter Games—a competition that features the world's foremost athletes with disabilities—after the Olympic Games, from March 7 to March 16.

Several volunteers from the AMTA-Utah Chapter played prominent roles in organizing the volunteer group—the 2002 Winter Sports Massage Team—and working at the Games. Those officers from AMTA-Utah participating on the team included **Paul (Ron) Findlay**, president; **Roger Olbrot**, third vice president and director of the Olympic massage team; **Deborah Adams**, secretary; **Brenda Swadley**, treasurer; **Craig Sauer**, education chair; **Pamela Hanni**, second vice president; and **Carolyn Rowse**, finance chair.

The sports massage team utilized three venues. The Olympic Village had eight tables and one chair; the Main Media Center had nine chairs; and the Olympic Family Hotel had one chair and two tables. Massages began on January 29, and continued through February 26, two days after the closing ceremonies.

“We expect that our team will have given 25,000 massages by the time the Olympics end,” says Olbrot. “Most of the people on our team are very experienced in sports massage; we expect to do a lot of hamstring and ankle work.”

Besides having U.S. volunteers from 39 states, massage therapists from 11 other countries—Argentina, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, England, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Japan and Zimbabwe—also served on the team.

“This was an extremely rewarding experience,” remarks Olbrot. “I enjoyed working with a very diverse team of therapists. It also was a big challenge meeting the needs of the athletes, the International Olympic Committee and the media. All in all, it was a wonderful opportunity to promote our profession.”

AMTA Improves Insurance Coverage

As a member of AMTA, you benefit from participating in the AMTA-sponsored Professional Liability Program. To keep your liability insurance in step with current practices, the techniques/modalities AMTA covers under the professional and general liability insurance program are listed in the box below—just a few of the many techniques covered.

Insured Professional and Associate members must be able to legally practice in their state, and show evidence of training in their specific area or technique in order to be covered by liability insurance. Check with your city, county or state licensing board to confirm whether a specific technique or modality is within the state's scope of practice.

The insurance provider, Seabury & Smith, is now called Marsh Affinity Group Services, a service of Seabury & Smith. Their contact information remains the same, and insurance inquiries should be sent to: Marsh Affinity Group Services, a service of Seabury & Smith, 1440 Renaissance Drive, Park Ridge, IL 60068-1400; 800-323-2106; www.seaburychicago.com.

For additional questions, visit the AMTA Web site at:

www.amtamassage.org/benefits/insurance.htm, **or contact Member Services at 847-864-0123.**

A Few New Techniques/Modalities Covered By AMTA

Cancer Massage
Ear Candling
Energy Work
Facials and Waxings
Geriatric Massage
Lomi Lomi
Rolfing
Tai Chi
Teaching infant massage to parents
Yoga

AND SO MUCH MORE!

U.S. Department Of Education Recommends COMTA As National Accrediting Agency

The Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) has successfully completed a major step in becoming a national accrediting agency. Last December, commission officials presented a petition for recognition to the U.S. Department of Education's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity. This committee is charged with the review of accrediting agency compliance with federal regulations.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend to Rod Paige, secretary of the Department of Education, to recognize COMTA as a national accrediting agency. The committee members acknowledged COMTA for its thorough presentation and careful attention to detail in its petition and in its practices. This milestone is the final hurdle prior to the actual signature of the secretary, which is the official notification of being a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

Recognition provides an opportunity for schools to apply for participation in the Title IV, Federal Financial Aid program. This would give students access to grants and student loans.

"This is an exciting event, moving massage therapy education into similar status with other practitioner groups in the complementary and alternative medicine fields, such as acupuncture, chiropractic and naturopathic educational models," says Carole Ostendorf, Ph.D., executive director of COMTA.

President's Letter: Finding Common Ground

Last fall, I had the privilege of attending the National Policy Dialogue To Advance Integrated Health Care. Held from October 31 through November 3, 2001, the policy meeting, based at the Georgetown University Conference Center in Washington, D.C., included representatives from both conventional and complementary and alternative disciplines. Participation at the meeting was by invitation only, and was limited to a select group of national leaders.

The American Massage Therapy Association was delighted to be a part of this dialogue, where we listened to others talk about the basic concepts of integrated care. This meeting was cohosted by the American Association for Health Freedom (formally the American Preventive Medical Association), Bastyr University and the Georgetown University School of Medicine.

In 1995, a coalition committed to choices in health care began a major effort to accomplish two things: 1) To pass federal legislation allowing access to a wider range of therapies; and 2) To incorporate the National Institutes of Health Office of Alternative Medicine in the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), which has greater authority and funds research. Under the leadership of U.S. Sens. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., majority leader, and Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, the second goal was achieved.

The coalition asked key legislators this question: How do we capitalize on this success to identify and eliminate legislative and regulatory inequities that stand in the way of an effective, integrated health-care system for our country? Sen. Daschle asked the questions in return: What is the big picture, and is there consensus? The coalition began its task of creating a document for a National Plan to Advance Integrated Health Care. In order for this discussion to move forward, the coalition brought together a group of stakeholders with one mission: to identify and find a common ground.

Research has documented the interest of the American public in alternative medicine and integrated care. Substantial interest and encouragement has come from government, providers, educators, patients and researchers to plan for the future of integrated health care.

Some of the objectives of this meeting were to build strong alliances among those that have a commitment to advancing integrated health care safely and effectively; to develop a dynamic, shared policy agenda that all participants can use to promote their organizational goals for integrated health care; and to provide a forum in order for stakeholders to communicate effectively based on information and collaboration.

From the American Association for Health Freedom Web site (www.apma.net), "The National Policy Dialogue will provide a collaborative forum on national policy ... in which stakeholders from all parts of the health care community will have a chance to discuss and debate their perceptions about the future of integrative health care and federal policy with individuals who are not normally part of their network."

The questions for AMTA members are: Are we ready for this, and do we want to be involved? I think we can all agree that every human being should have a choice in health care. It would also be wonderful if everyone had access to massage therapy, as well as other alternative therapies.

AMTA was fortunate to be a part of this dialogue, but we also want to make certain that our members have the right to choose to work as they have in the past. Finding common ground among health-care providers is a good way to begin.

Fingerprints

Member Discovers Synergy Between Massage Therapy And Tai Chi

When longtime tai chi instructor Nancy Bloomfield enrolled in a massage therapy course, neither she nor her teacher, **Sabine Bayer (VA)**, realized what synergistic relationship was in store for them.

After massage courses led by Bayer, Bloomfield's thumbs and wrists ached, even though she had been practicing martial arts for more than 20 years. She began incorporating tai chi and chi kung—ancient practices used to heal the body through visualization, mental discipline and physical movement—following massage sessions on these muscles she was not used to using. Fellow students noticed a difference as well when Bloomfield incorporated tai chi exercises on them.

After a massage from Bloomfield, Bayer felt the energy and power of the tai chi exercises coming through the massage techniques.

Inspired, Bayer, a native German who has practiced massage therapy for 20 years, studied tai chi with Bloomfield, and found that the principles of tai chi enhanced the benefits of her massage techniques, benefits her clients noticed as well.

“Tai chi can help massage therapists improve their efficiency and balance, as well as posture and strength,” says Bayer.

Bloomfield and Bayer plan to conduct workshops in Virginia for massage therapists on combining tai chi with body mechanics.

Massage Students Set High Goal For NMTAW

As part of AMTA's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week (NMTAW) in late October 2001, students at the Lindon, Utah, campus of the Utah College of Massage Therapy held an event entitled “100 Heros in 24 Hours.” The students set out to massage 100 community firefighters and police officers in 24 hours, giving evening chair massages to police officers and afternoon massages to firefighters.

“Although we didn't quite reach our goal of 100, we still feel the event was a success, and greatly appreciated by our local heroes,” says Kim Novotny, community outreach coordinator on the Lindon campus.

Share Your News!

Send articles and pictures, if available, to: AMTA, ATTN: *Hands On*, 820 Davis St., Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201-4444. Or, send them via E-mail to Michelle Wolf at: mwolf@amtamassage.org.

Election Reminder

Candidate application packets for the AMTA 2002 National Board Elections are due to the National Office by March 15 at 5 p.m. Central time.

Requests for packets must be made in writing. Either mail your request to: AMTA 2002 Commission on Nominations, 820 Davis St., Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201-4444; send a fax to: 847-864-1178, Attention: Mark Tyle, Governance and Chapter Relations Department; or E-mail: ***mtyle@amtamassage.org***.

AMTA Keeps Its Promises

AMTA values its members and protects their rights and privacy. This is a core value of your association.

AMTA's reputation has been under assault as a result of *Massage Today's* misleading statements about our lawsuit against Maxwell Petersen Associates, Inc. (corporate owner of *Massage Today*). Since last June, AMTA has kept you informed of why we filed the suit and its process through the *Hands On* newsletter, AMTA Web site and chapter mailings. Visit the Members' Section of AMTA's Web site at www.amtamassage.org/members/mert-mpaupdate3.htm for those details.

It is important that we continue to inform the entire massage therapy industry about what AMTA really stands for. That's why we've decided to communicate this message to all massage therapists. Look for an advertising message from AMTA in the March/April issue of *Massage Magazine* and the March issue of *Massage Today*.

The ad explains why AMTA sometimes must take legal action on its members' behalf, even if it isn't popular. It also mentions other promises AMTA makes to you and the massage therapy profession. AMTA is a member-driven association, and is committed to engage in:

- Programs, such as AMTA's *Find a Massage Therapist*® national locator service, which help members build their practices;
- Public awareness and education campaigns to promote the profession and AMTA members to consumers and other health-care professionals;
- Upholding professional ethics and standards;
- Support of research that confirms the efficacy of massage;
- Fostering state regulation of massage therapy to protect the safety of both massage therapists and consumers;
- Developing the careers of massage therapy professionals through continuing education.

These are promises AMTA makes; and these are promises AMTA keeps.

– ***Carolyn C. Talley,***
AMTA President

– ***Elizabeth M. Lucas, CAE***
AMTA Executive Director

Web Site News

Online National Locator Service Limiter Reduces Unwanted Solicitations

The online AMTA *Find a Massage Therapist*[®] national locator service has a limiter that stops viewers from clicking on many names; viewers can only access information for two members before it stops searching.

The limiter was created last year at the request of members who were receiving calls and/or E-mails from unwanted solicitors for product sales, seminars and adult entertainment. Other members communicated that firms hiring massage therapists at low rates for business conventions were also soliciting them.

The locator service is designed to help consumers and health-care professionals who are looking for a quality massage in their city find an AMTA Professional member. The limiter allows viewers to look at two member profiles, and on the third try, it refers them to the toll-free number. Consumers will not regain access again for another 24 hours. Even the live operator for the toll-free locator service telephone number can only provide information for three separate members.

The locator limiter has been established to protect the privacy rights of AMTA members. As stated in the legal notices posted online, the locator service is not to be used for commercial purposes (i.e., creating phone and/or E-mail lists). Taking names, telephone numbers or E-mail addresses from the locator service is outright theft. Creating lists from this information and selling them is a criminal act.

Legislative Update: Idaho Moves Closer To Presenting Massage Bill

The AMTA-Idaho Chapter's Government Relations Committee officially began working in October 2000 on a bill to regulate massage therapy in the state. A coalition was formed, and after months of research, began a first draft of a legislative proposal last June.

The coalition has held regional forums throughout Idaho to: 1) Discuss the bill, and solicit input from members and non-member massage therapists; and 2) Identify opposition and/or weaknesses in the bill, with the intention of finding solutions before reaching the legislative sessions. "The meetings were intense, but extremely beneficial," says **Gayla Nickel**, AMTA-Idaho Chapter president and government relations and coalition chair.

Presently, lobbyists are working with representatives of the physical therapist, chiropractor and medical doctor groups to resolve any potential conflicts before finalizing the bill. The major issues of concern have been the potential power of a state board, grandfathering and the perceived crossover between massage therapy and physical therapy.

The general apprehension expressed from massage therapists is that a state board might be too restrictive in its rules, and be vulnerable to non-massage governmental entities. On the complex issue of grandfathering, licensed health-care professionals are demanding a requirement of at least a minimum educational standard. Another issue is that representatives of the physical therapists have requested that the definition of massage therapy be tightened to better clarify the differences between the two professions.

The bill, in its final stages of revision, was presented for posting and printing at the end of January.

Numbers Say It All:

Enrolling In AMTA's National Locator Service Can Boost Your Business

AMTA's *Find a Massage Therapist*[®] national locator service is attracting more potential clients for Professional-classification members than ever before. In only a 10-month period (March through December 2001), some 95,000 people searched the online locator service on AMTA's Web site or called the toll-free telephone number to find an AMTA member, compared to 76,000 inquiries in a full 12-month span (March 2000 through February 2001).

Edwin Rodriguez (IL) says that in each of the three years he has been an AMTA Professional member, his new clients from the locator service have more than covered the cost of his membership dues. "I've gotten four new corporate clients from the locator service in the past year for onsite chair massage," states Rodriguez.

More than 100 people called the toll-free number to find an AMTA Professional-classification massage therapist just after a National Office-initiated article appeared in the December 2001 issue of *Reader's Digest*; AMTA had begun working with *Reader's Digest* nearly five months before. An article featured on MSNBC.com in December, coordinated by AMTA, also resulted in an increase of online inquiries to the locator service.

This AMTA benefit is bringing increased potential business to those members who participate in the service—just half of AMTA Professional members as of January 1. When the numbers were calculated through the end of AMTA's fiscal year on February 28, an estimated potential average of nine searches will have been made for each participating AMTA member.

If you are a Professional Active member and are not yet a part of the locator service, enroll today by going to: **www.amtamassage.org/members/enroll8.htm**.

NCBTMB Approves AMTA Foundation As Continuing Education Provider

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) approved the AMTA Foundation as a continuing education provider under Category A as of December 18, 2001. The National Certification Board's Continuing Education Provider Review Panel voted to approve the Foundation's application for a two-year period. This greatly enhances the ability of the Foundation to serve as an educational resource for the massage therapy profession.

A "Thank-You" To All AMTA Foundation Volunteers

The AMTA Foundation advances the knowledge and practice of massage therapy by supporting scientific research, education and community outreach. The AMTA Foundation wishes to thank AMTA for its continued support and to thank individual volunteers for their support in 2001:

Alice Abbott, *Texas, Friend of the Foundation*
Virginia Anthony-Barrow & Dan Barrow, *New Mexico, Friends of the Foundation*
John Balletto, *Rhode Island, President of the AMTA Foundation*
Tree Bright, *North Carolina, Friend of the Foundation*
Shannon M. Burns, *Ed.D., Illinois, Chair of the Community Outreach Review Committee*
Randa Cherry, *Iowa, AMTA Board of Director Trustee*
Lee Vincent Cilla, *Georgia, Friend of the Foundation*
Julia Connelly, *M.D., Virginia, Research Proposal Review Committee Member*
Sara Corkery, *Illinois, Communications and Marketing Committee Member*
Debra Curties, *Ontario, Canada, Public Member Trustee*
Art Delgado, *New Mexico, Friend of the Foundation*
Mark Dixon, *California, Friend of the Foundation*
Rachel Egberman, *Michigan, Friend of the Foundation*
Terry Eicher, *Iowa, Friend of the Foundation*
Carla Eisenberg, *Illinois, Community Review Outreach Committee Member*
Claude Gagnon, *Wisconsin, Friend of the Foundation*
Cheryl Gorey, *Massachusetts, Friend of the Foundation*
LuAnn Hagel, *North Dakota, Friend of the Foundation*
Lorraine Hancock, *Virginia, Friend of the Foundation*
Jacqueline A. Hart, *M.D., Massachusetts, Public Member Trustee*
Glenn M. Hymel, *Ed.D., Louisiana, Chair of the Database Committee*
Michelle Jacques, *Wisconsin, Friend of the Foundation*
Sharon Marden Johnson, *Maine, Vice President of the AMTA Foundation*
David A. Kaminski, *Arizona, Community Outreach Review Committee Member*
Daniel Kitchen, *New Jersey, Friend of the Foundation*
John Kutz, *Maryland, Friend of the Foundation*
Claudette Laroche, *New Hampshire, Friend of the Foundation*
Susan L. Lee, *Wisconsin, Community Outreach Review Committee Member*
Brian Marcotte, *Ph.D., Rhode Island, Public Member Trustee*
Bob McAtee, *Colorado, Friend of the Foundation*
Martha Brown Menard, *Ph.D., Virginia, Chair of the Research Proposal Review Committee*
Michelle Minch, *Washington, Friend of the Foundation and Chair of the Scholarship Review Committee*
Maureen Moon, *Colorado, Co-Chair of the 2001 Dollar-Per-Member Campaign*
Raymond T. Moriyasu, *Rhode Island, Scholarship Review Committee Member*
V.J. Nelson, *Nebraska, Friend of the Foundation*
Ahmos Netanel, *California, AMTA Member Trustee*
Bonnie Niebauer, *Pennsylvania, AMTA Member Trustee*
Steve Olson, *North Dakota, AMTA Board of Director Trustee*
Susan Porter, *Arkansas, Friend of the Foundation*

Grant Rich, *Maine, Research Proposal Review Committee Member*
Sandi Russ, *South Carolina, Co-Chair of the 2001 Dollar-Per-Member Campaign*
Joy Sagon, *North Dakota, Friend of the Foundation*
Robin Ann Schafer, *Alabama, Friend of the Foundation*
Jan Schwartz, *Arizona, Friend of the Foundation and Chair of the Scholarship Review Committee*
Clarence E. Smith, *M.D., Florida, Public Member Trustee*
Jackie Stearns-Jenkins, *Ohio, Friend of the Foundation*
Albert Svette, *Ohio, Friend of the Foundation*
Carolyn C. Talley, *South Carolina, Friend of the Foundation*
Mary Tuchscherer, *Ph.D., Minnesota, Research Proposal Review Committee Member*
Brent Williams, *Kentucky, Friend of the Foundation*
Angela Wood, *Tennessee, Friend of the Foundation*

Education Events

AMTA Continuing Education Requirement Change

The definition of continuing education hours accepted by AMTA for maintaining Professional-classification membership has been significantly broadened. The purpose of this revision is to empower members to assess their own educational needs to determine what coursework would benefit their practice.

To fulfill the continuing education requirement, an education program must meet the following description: An organized continuing education experience needs to be directly related to the practice of massage therapy, and offered under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction. These courses may be experiential learning, theoretical or research in nature.

AMTA has deleted language limiting the number of business-related courses accepted as part of the 48 hours of continuing education required every four years for renewal as a Professional Active member. Research has been added to the list of accepted educational programs. First aid and CPR classes still do not qualify.

Following are answers to a few frequently asked questions about continuing education in light of the policy changes:

Q: When do I submit my continuing education hours?

A: *Submit the hours when you renew your membership. You do not need to wait until the end of the four-year period.*

Q: Would this class be approved by AMTA?

A: *AMTA does not approve continuing education classes. It is the members' responsibility to ensure that a class meets the definition of acceptable class types for the AMTA continuing education requirement.*

Q: How do I become a provider for AMTA?

A: *AMTA does not approve providers or courses. Interested providers should contact the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork [www.ncbtmb.com].*

If you have any questions, call the AMTA National Office at 847-864-0123.

Calendar: Regional and National Events

March 14–17

19th Annual AMTA New England Conference

Boxborough, Massachusetts

Contact: 401-233-8108

April 19–21

AMTA National Learning Center

Salt Lake City, Utah

Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

May 16–19

Mid-Atlantic Conference-AMTA

Ocean City, Maryland

Contact: 410-298-0704

June 7–10

AMTA National Learning Center

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

June 8–10

AMTA Board of Directors Meeting

Savannah, Georgia

July 12–14

AMTA National Learning Center

Columbus, Ohio

Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

September 30–October 1

AMTA Board of Directors Meeting

Portland, Oregon

October 2–6

AMTA National Convention

Portland, Oregon