

The Buc Shot

August 2015

Calendar

September 19th – Scarecrow Festival, AMBUCS Park

September 23rd – Early Board Meeting at Zas

Sept. 30th – Oct. 3rd – National AMBUCS Conference, Biloxi, MS (registration open; see below)

Oct. 17th – Disability Expo, Fluid Events Center, Champaign

Scarecrow Festival

The 23rd Annual Scarecrow Festival will kick off on September 19th at 10am and the fun will continue until 3pm. This is a well attended event designed to showcase the park and let people know what a great resource is waiting in East Urbana. The event will feature kids' games, hayrack rides, Barreltrain rides, a bake sale, food sales and a huge flea market. There might even be some interesting cars show up! Lots of volunteers will be needed so clear your calendars and come help out. The festival committee is meeting over the next week so contact Keith Jamieson if you would like to be a member. We are hoping to have the APO students on hand to run the kids' games. They bring energy and extra fun to this great event. Tell all your friends!

AmTrykes

Our August 4th lunch meeting was a chance to give away an AmTryke to Richard from Champaign. For Richard to fight his illness he needs lots of exercise and an AmTryke will make that fun. His wife, Vivian, also joined us for lunch and told us a little about him. They have been married for 17 years but together for 25. Richard loves cars and trucks and used to do a lot of pin striping to customize them. He's been very active in his retirement and still does a lot of model car building. Richard's disease has been with him for five years. It has made his left side numb but luckily he can still drive. He is looking forward to having the AmTryke at home and is sure to customize it in his own unique way. Happy riding, Richard!



The therapists working with Richard, Earl and Heather, also attended the lunch. Heather is a new therapist doing her internship at the Paxton Clinic just north of Champaign where Earl works. (We are starting a new chapter in that area and hope the charter papers are filed soon.) Heather is a two time winner of an AMBUCS scholarship from the Decatur chapter. She loves to work with children and when she saw the AmTryke at the Paxton Clinic she immediately thought about how AmTrykes could help some of the children she has seen. Heather hopes to practice in Peoria, IL. Best of luck, Heather!

Our next AmTryke giveaway was to Bill in Champaign. Members Deb Griest and Sally Denhart along with Deb's friend Deb Blair (yes, they have the same first name), delivered the AmTryke to his home on a Friday afternoon, just in time for the weekend. Bill's illness is another one that can be helped by exercise. It's also important to Bill that he retain some of his independence as the disease progresses. Bill is not a tall man so Deb Griest had the seat pre-adjusted to the middle of the trike. Too far up for Bill. Deb adjusted it back a notch. Still too far up for Bill. Next the seat was too far back. After one more adjustment, the fit was just right. It was sort of like an AmTryke Goldilocks adjustment. After that final adjustment Bill took off riding! One more little



problem presented itself when Bill tried to downshift into the first set of gears. The “derailer” just wouldn’t move the chain down that far. Deb tried some adjustments, watched the YouTube video on how to fix a derailer which told her to do exactly what she had already done, then tested it herself several times. No luck. Because we AMBUCS stand behind our “products” Deb will see that this last little thing is fixed even if it has to be taken to a bike shop. Way to hang in there, Deb!

Ramps

Our club built two ramps in August, one in Gibson City and one in Champaign.

The first one on August 15 in Gibson City was a special ramp outside of our normal Champaign County area. We are trying to start a new chapter in that area and having something tangible there will help with potential members. And it was a doozy, two flats and two runs! Fourteen AMBUCS and friends met at 7am that Sunday morning for breakfast at the Country Kitchen in Gibson City. The build started a little before 8am and took almost five hours, the last two of which were rather warm. Always prepared, the workers had access to cold water and even some tea and Gatorade. Part of the build was in the shade so that helped and the tree gave workers a place to rest when not needed. We had some challenges with this ramp as we kept finding sidewalk and footings while digging the postholes but our leaders are used to rolling with the ...concrete and the ramp turned out beautiful! Thanks to all who helped!



Our next ramp, built on August 23rd was much smaller, 26 linear feet, and only had one flat and one run. There were 10 members and friends who worked that day and we finished earlier than usual at about 11am. This ramp had its challenges, too; this time it was gravel and rocks that gummed up the posthole digger. There were so many rocks that the home owner can use them for landscaping. The weather was better for this build and finishing early gave the volunteers time to enjoy the rest of their Sunday. Returning helper, Bill Blair, was a real asset and we hope to see him at all our events. Another big thank

you to all who came to help!

The next ramp build will probably be the weekend of September 12-13 in Mahomet. Details will follow.

Lunch Speakers: Steve Bentz and GCC Member John Opolka

August 11th brought the club two lunch speakers, Steve Bentz, Director of the Historic Virginia Theater, and member John Opolka, veteran, who spoke to us about his Freedom Flight.

Steve had actually heard of GCC AMBUCS before he was asked to speak to us. He started his talk by asking us for suggestions as to what kind of events we would like to see hosted at the theater. The Virginia Theater, built in 1921, is now owned and maintained by the Champaign Park District and can be used for all kinds of events, from concerts, to movies, to weddings. It is also available to groups such as the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Since it was built the theater has gone through lots of renovations to keep it safe and make it accessible to handicapped people. The most recent renovation was about \$10 million dollars and was primarily building fixes, like the ceiling, and improvements, like an area at the back of the seats for wheelchairs. They also restored the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ which is played for most events. The organ is known as a half-pipe organ since the pipes are only on one side of the theater. There wasn’t enough room for a second set of pipes. This beautiful organ rises from the orchestra pit on a renovated lift while being played. It is often used for sing-alongs of old songs before showings of old movies. One of the events hosted at the theater is a production performed entirely by children. One of the



performers had a rare disorder where she “hears” sights and “sees” sounds. This had made her shy and uncertain. Once she started working on the performance she began to come out of her shell. It helped her learn to work with her disorder and helped her make more friends. We thank Steve for speaking with us and look forward to a great theater season.



When he was young, Big Hat member John Opolka joined the Illinois National Guard and was sent to Korea. He performed admirably and was lucky enough to return home only to find he, and his fellow veterans all but forgotten by the American public. Korea was “the forgotten war” and many politicians at the time maintained that it was not a war but only a “police action” even though thousands died. Due to the efforts of veterans that war is no longer forgotten and has its own memorial in Washington, DC. Veterans have organized a nation-wide Honor Flight network dedicated to providing all veterans who apply a free trip to Washington to visit memorials honoring their service and sacrifice. Land of Lincoln Honor Flight, Inc., the one John took, pays all the expenses for John and a care giver to fly to Washington, including hotels and visits to the monuments. John’s grandson went along with him on the flight and had to attend training sessions so that he would know what to expect on the trip. John’s flight left Springfield, IL, at 4:45am with 176 veterans on the flight. John was overwhelmed by the support of the people on the trip, the

organizers, and people he saw at the monuments. On one visit, a small child ran up and hugged John and thanked him for his service. We also thank John and all veterans for their service! Forgotten no more!

Christmas Not Too Far Away

Our club will be decorating AMBUCS Park again this year starting in October. Park decorating leader, Mary Lou Younger, would like some help in cleaning and organizing the decorations in the storage shed at the park. Anyone who can help will be greatly appreciated! Please come to the shed at 10am on September 5th. If we have lots of people we should be done quickly. We also store the Barreltrain in this shed and we need to be able to get it out for the Scarecrow Festival on September 19th.



National Convention

Registration for the National Conference in Biloxi is now open! Point your browser at:

<http://www.ambucs.org/2015-national-conference-biloxi-ms/>

and start the registration process. The Early Bird conference registration is now closed so the cost to attend is \$275. On-site registration is \$325. Please be sure to send a copy of your registration confirmation to Treasurer Elaine Windingland.

Be aware as usual, that you must make a hotel reservation separate from the conference registration. The block of hotel rooms will be released on September 11th so be sure to make your reservation before then. Rooms Monday through Thursday will be \$90/night;

Friday and Saturday the cost will be \$159/night. There is also a \$9/night resort fee.

GCC AMBUCS member Larry Windingland is organizing the golf outing during the conference. Players are still needed so anyone wanting to play should contact Larry, lwrcflyer@sbcglobal.net. Players must pay in advance and make the checks out to GCC AMBUCS.

Lucky Buck

On June 23rd the membership started passing around a “Lucky Buck”. The member with the Buck must either bring a guest to the lunch meeting or spend a couple of minutes talking about themselves in front of the group. The member with the Buck must secretly pass the Buck on to another member before the end of that meeting.

On August 4th, Don Dunlap told us a little about himself. Don was born and raised here in Champaign but moved to Florida as an adult. There he opened a beach dive shop and worked there for three years. He married his wife Darcy who is also an AMBUC, and raised two children, Baily and Chance, while running his own business,

Don's 24Hr Towing. Don joined AMBUCS in 2001 and has been Chapter President and District Governor. He enjoys playing golf, boating, and skiing. Thanks for all you do, Don!

One of our newer members, Cris Vowels, had the Lucky Buck next. Cris started her association with the club about 8 years ago when Elaine Windingland began asking her to play in our golf fundraiser and attend our benefit dinner in the winter. Cris is the principal at Prairie School and in 2014 asked our club to build a ramp for access from a sidewalk to the playground equipment for her wheelchair bound students. Cris helped with the build and decided to join the club. Prairie School has over 800 students and at the time of this writing four of them are in wheelchairs. They love being able to get to the equipment on the ramp and the other students love to run up and down on it as well. Chris started teaching in 1986 and did that for 17 years as a Special Ed teacher. All totaled she has been in the school system for almost 30 years and still loves her job! Young school children don't have the filters that adults have and will say almost anything. Chris remembers one student looking her in the face and saying, "You don't look so old from the back!" She lives in St. Joseph, has a wonderful husband, and three adult children. Cris enjoys being an AMBUC and would like to see us get our name out more into the small towns surrounding Champaign. Glad to have you, Cris!



District 4A Meeting

On August 26th our newly elected District Governor, Steve Gibbs, called a meeting of the members at a Mexican restaurant in Champaign. Fourteen district members attended the meeting, most from Champaign but a good percentage from the Danville chapter.

The first action was to introduce officers for the District. Elaine Windingland from GCC, will be the new District Secretary/Treasurer. Bud Mesker resigned due to health issues. Donna Carlton is the District AmBility Chairman. The group also voted in a new District Big Hat President, Lisa Bridges Martin who was elected in abstention. The budget from April was presented and approved by the members.



Next came the Chapter Reports. Among other projects, the Danville Chapter reported that their handicap sign project, where signs showing handicap people are attached to regular handicap signs on parking spaces, is going well. The caption on the signs under a picture of a handicapped person says, "Remember Me and Keep It Free!" This project has gained the club a lot of publicity in their community. The GCC AMBUCS Chapter reported on the ramps built and AmTrykes given away, our Charity Golf Outing, and our Bike Day in AMBUCS Park. The Greater Indy Chapter reported in by phone and Donna Carlton-Vish reported that the RAC Trikes (pronounced Race Trikes) Chapter is working well.

Donna Carlton-Vish also reported on the continuing popularity of our District AmTryke Trailer. This trailer has many miles on its tires as it is not only used by our District but also borrowed by National to do AmTryke Road Shows across the country. The trailer has been kept up-to-date with the latest AmTrykes and accessories some provided by us and some by National. This is actually our second District trailer since we were one of the first Districts to have one back in 2003. The trailer will be on the road again in September and October.

Deb Griest reported on the new club we are trying to build in Ford and Iroquois County. GCC AMBUCS gave an AmTryke to a mother in the Paxton, IL area and she lamented that they didn't have a chapter in her area. Deb immediately told her that starting a new chapter in her area was easy and told her how. We hope the charter papers will be filed before the end of August. Diane Carlton reported that after giving an AmTryke to a woman in the Quincy, IL area a new club in the area is possible, too.

Governor Steve Gibbs closed the meeting by reminding everyone that the Big Hat Fundraiser being led by John Davis still needs support. Any member can buy a brick for \$100 and be entered in some contests. The more bricks bought the more entries. Contact John today!

Board Action

Our possible grant request to the Illinois Marathon is still in the works. Steve Gibbs talked with one of the owners of the marathon, Jedd Switcher, who is still willing to come talk with our group at a lunch meeting. We hope to schedule him soon.

The Orange Krush grant has been submitted and we hope to hear soon if we will receive any money.

Deb Griest reported that National has approved our request to have the Spring Conference on April 29-30, 2016. Location will be determined later.

Due to health issues, Bud Mesker has resigned as AmBility Coordinator. President Andrea Betzler appointed Scott Price as the new AmBility Coordinator. Scott has some established working relationships with therapists so he will be the contact person to start the process. Larry Windingland will work with Scott and be the one to place the actual order with National. This will help in the financial record keeping as he “knows” our Treasurer, Elaine Windingland. Larry will also be a backup contact person for therapists if Scott is unavailable.



The Board approved the expenditure of up to \$200 for a new circular saw, or worm gear, for use in building ramps. Ray Griest will watch for sales and purchase the saw if there is a good sale or if the current one stops working completely.

If there is a Big Hat Auction at the upcoming National Convention, the green prototype of the first AmTryke our club purchased two years ago, will return to the auction to allow other clubs the honor of hosting it for a year.

Please note: the next board meeting would normally fall during the national convention so the board voted to move it to **Sept. 23rd**, one week early.

Nuggets of Knowledge

For new club members and as a reminder to members who have been with us a while, here are some definitions of terms unique to AMBUCS. A full list of the terms can be found on the national Web site under Member Resources → Admin Documents.

AMBUCS – A commonly used nick name for National AMBUCS, Inc. It is a national nonprofit service organization composed of a diverse group of men and women dedicated to creating independence and opportunities for people with disabilities by performing community service, by providing AmTryke therapeutic tricycles for people with disabilities, and by providing AMBUCS Scholars-Scholarships for Therapists.

AmTryke Therapeutic Tricycle Evaluation Sites – Part of the National AmBility Program, a project to place AmTryke therapeutic tricycles in rehabilitation units, children’s hospitals and pediatric clinics, and geriatric centers across the U.S. These sites allow therapists access to AmTrykes of various sizes to evaluate whether a particular rider would benefit from using the trike.

Member News

GCC AMBUCS friend, **David Jamieson**, had a small accident on his motorcycle and dislocated his shoulder. David helps out at most of our club ramp builds and is great at running the posthole digger. We wish David a speedy recovery!

And speaking of ramp builds, on a recent one **Larry Windingland** smacked another volunteer in the chest with a piece of lumber. Larry was then heard to say, “I’m sorry for being such a boob!”

As mentioned before, member **Bud Mesker** is having some health issues. We wish him well and hope to see him back in the pink soon!

Winning Chances

August 4th – 50/50 drawing of \$12 went to Keith Jamieson. The \$21 in attendance money could have been won by Mike Foley but he was not present.

August 11th – 50/50 drawing of \$11 went to Andrea Betzler. The \$42 in attendance money went to Laura Gibbs.

August 18th – 50/50 drawing of \$11 went to Keith Jamieson. The \$22 in attendance money went to Deb Griest.

August 25th – 50/50 drawing of \$11 went to Jamieson, member Mary Lou Younger's grandson. The \$21 in attendance money could have been won by Mary Lewis but she was not present.