

Note: when you finish reading this newsletter, please pass it on to someone who doesn't know about AMBUCS.

National Conference

August 2-5 was this year's National Conference in Louisville, KY. The host hotel was the historic Galt Hotel in downtown Louisville. It's a beautiful hotel located within walking distance of museums and distilleries and sits right on the Ohio River.



We started the conference with a paddle boat ride on the river. All were encouraged to wear their best Derby hats and one GCC member, Sally Denhart, won second place for her big black and white hat.

Our keynote speaker on Thursday was **David DeSantis**, an actor who has Down's syndrome but has starred in two movies. He kept the members up and moving with music and dancing during his talk. David shared with us how an Amtryke gave him the feeling of "riding free, choosing where to go and when to stop." He was on "cloud nine" riding his Amtryke! David also told us how his parents kept him in regular schools growing up and he credits that for his success today. He showed us that no matter what your challenges are you can still succeed.

The theme was "A Magical Week" and outgoing president, **Carmela Davis**, who visited almost all of our chapters during her year as president, made two Christmas tree ornaments for each Chapter using pictures she and her husband took at each visit. Each Chapter took home their individual ornaments at the end of the conference on Saturday night.

The Regional Caucuses were held Friday morning and the Central Region voted to give \$3,000 from our excess dollars to our fund for a Named Scholarship. We gave \$2,000 to the National Amtryke Program, leaving around \$7,000 in our account to be used in part for the 2024 Regional Conference hosted by us. GCC received awards for 100% Amtryke giving, 100% Scholarship giving, and 100% Cornerstone giving. Jay Balmer will take over as Regional Director for the next two years and GCC member Deb Griest will step into the secretary/treasurer roll.

During the Foundation Program session Friday morning, we found out how our Chapter had done during the year. The short answer is Great! First, members **Larry and Elaine Windingland**, contributed to the William L. White Fund and **Ray and Deb Griest** (right with President **Carmela Davis**), completed their named scholarship. GCC was also awarded an **Ultimate Givers** patch; was fifth in the Nation for **100% Giving Big Heart Award** with over \$19,000 in giving; reached the **\$200,000 plateau** for our lifetime Chapter giving. We were **7th in the Nation** for our overall scorecard points; we were **3rd in the Nation** for overall growth with 11 new members; we received a patch for the **50-74 level** in giving away Amtrykes with our **60** given during the year; this newsletter, The BucShot, round-



Calendar

September 18—GCC Charity Golf Fundraiser
October 21—Scarecrow Festival
October 28—disAbility Expo

2024

March 16—Cash Bash
April 5-6—Regional Conference, Champaign

ed out our awards by winning **3rd Best Newsletter in the Nation**. At right is Past President, **Larry Windingland**, with National President, **Carmela Davis**, receiving one of the 7 awards on behalf of our Chapter. Great job everyone!



Later on Friday, we heard about the status of our new Amtryke design. Jake Schumacher has been testing the prototype of the first model to be redesigned and has ridden it over 100 miles. Among other changes, the shifting will be a maximum of 3-speeds and the seat adjustment levers will be on one side instead of under the frame. There is a target date of October 2023 for a small trial run of the new design for more testing.

During the final General Business session on Saturday morning, we learned that National created a new Western Region from the “at large” Chapters in the West. This will give them the support they need and help them feel more a part of the National organization. We also heard about scholarships and that since the program’s start in 1955, we have given over \$10 million dollars to over 17,000 students!

Gordan Shaw is running to be our next National President-Elect and we can reach him at shaw24@gmail.com. He hopes to start visiting Chapters soon.



On Saturday afternoon, 30+ children and adults came to the Amtryke Giveaway held in one of the hotel’s ballrooms. There was a track set up for their first rides and lots of members there to cheer them on. Unfortunately, the recipient of our GCC Amtryke could not make the rodeo but we will receive pictures of the give away as soon as it happens. The young man at the right was so happy to get his Amtryke that he was cheering in his stroller! Each child was given a hand-made balloon animal to take home along with his Amtryke.



The conference ended as it always does with the incoming National President’s Reception and the President’s Dinner. No picture can do justice to the beauty of the room! The theme was Carmela’s Christmas and we had beautiful, huge, lighted centerpieces on each table, lighted reindeer by the stage and Christmas decorations along the walls to be used as backdrops for pictures. Everyone was dressed in their finest outfits and could even have their picture taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus. We appreciate President Carmela Davis and all she did for AMBUCS during her year and all she arranged to make our final night at conference one to remember!



Hope to see everyone in somewhere next year!

Amtrykes

In August we gave away five Amtrykes, the first two for a pair of twins, David and Nina. Next, tiny Dash got an Amtryke that needed some extra support. Next was Jacieon, followed by America. Great to be able to give that many away!

David and Nina, who mom calls them her “miracle babies” were born premature, one weighing only 16



ounces and one weighing 1.5 pounds. They spent 165 days in the NICU but they were both fighters and they are 4 years old now and in preschool. They both love AMBUCS Park and Nina loves the splash pads in other parks but David stays on the edge. Both of them will love riding their trikes around the parks! (David left; Nina right)



Next up to receive a trike was little Dash. He has some muscle problems and his arms and legs need the strength an Amtryke can help him develop. When he came to lunch he was just coming from therapy and was a little on the sleepy side so he wasn't very happy that he was being put on a trike when all he wanted to do was sleep. Dash needed some special supports that we didn't have when he came to lunch so Scott Price took the accessories to Dash's home and added them there. He was much happier to ride the trike with the supports that made him feel safer. (Photo at left by Scott Price) Happy riding, Dash!



Our third Amtryke giveaway was to Jacieon and took place at AMBUCS Park after his father's work was done. Jacieon is a very busy child and really wanted to go spend time at the playground instead of getting on this new Amtryke. He is non-verbal but made his feelings known by making sounds and putting his helmet on member Larry Windingland instead. Then Jacieon took off on his toes up the sidewalk heading for the bridge in the park. Once we got him on the trike he somewhat happily rode down the sidewalk towards his car. His dad assures us he will love it once he's not distracted by the playground. Happy riding, Jacieon!



Our last giveaway of the month was to America, a young lady who has bad balance issues that make riding a regular bike out of the question. She is a senior in high school but is also taking some college-level classes and needs a way to get around without her mom driving her. The Amtryke will allow her to get where she needs to be and also allow her to spend some time with her friends while he mom is at work. We wish you well, America, and good luck in college! (Photo at left by Larry Windingland)



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AMBUCS Golf Outing September 18

There is still time to sign up for the charity Golf Outing at **Lake of the Woods Golf Course**, Mahomet! Only \$100 per player and that includes, breakfast, snacks, games, a cart, and lunch after the rounds. It's a great event on a beautiful course! Contact **Don Dunlap, 217-202-3061, Keith Jamieson at 217-377-7112, or Larry Windingland at 217-621-6991.**



August Social

On August 17th GCC members and family, headed for the mini golf course in Savoy, IL, to chow down on some pizza and play 18 holes on the golf course. The course is located at the back of a mini-business complex that includes a car wash, the Elks Lodge, and the Old Orchard Bowling Lanes. The lanes makes a great pizza and we ordered some of that for the dinner and got tea and soft drinks from the course office. After eating, the gang broke up into 5-person teams and started on the courses. There are two courses, the blue and the orange, that have 18 fun holes including some water hazards. There weren't too many holes-in-one but everyone had a great time! Thanks to Renae' Strawbridge who organized the evening and got the pizza. Here's to next time! (Photo by Larry Windingland)



Splinters from the Board

The Board of Directors met again on August 31st at Denny's and addressed the following item:
==> voted to give \$500 to DSC for their Tree of Hope campaign

Tidbits

We'll provide a new flag for the pole at AMBUCS Park. Member **Keith Ewerks**, who works for the Urbana Park District, will make sure it gets put up soon.

FYI—member Ray Griest's idea of a salad is a bowl of shredded cheese with French dressing.

Member Scott Price and his wife Anne have been camping more and Anne now rates the campgrounds by how many times she had fallen there.

Winning Chances

08/01/23—50/50: \$11 to Don Dunlap; Attendance: \$79 could have been won by Brooke Chilton but she was not present.

08/08/23—50/50: \$10 to Jodie Harmon; Attendance: \$96 could have been won by Nelda Shaw but she was not present.

08/15/23—50/50: \$8 to guest Jace Strawbridge; Attendance: \$109 could have been won by Andy VanEngelenburg but he was not present.

08/22/23—50/50: \$7 to Mary Lou Younger; Attendance: \$123 was won by Sally Denhart.

08/29/23—50/50: \$5 to Sally Denhart; Attendance: \$11 could have been won by Bailee Dunlap but she was not present.