

CORNBELT BUC-ETIN



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JUNE 2016

THE PREZ SEZ...



Happy New Year!!!

AMBUCS™ New Year, that is. June 1st was the start of the new AMBUCS™ year. It was a pleasure serving as President of Cornbelt AMBUCS™ for the 2015-2016 AMBUCS™ year.

Cornbelt members should be proud of what we were able to accomplish with our Shoulders Together in 2015-2016. It was a record breaking year for Cornbelt AMBUCS™ in many ways. Get a cup of coffee (or some other beverage in an appropriate vessel), take a seat and read this entire article. It's much longer than usual, but there's sooo much that we did last year that needs to be shared.

For starters, there are more Cornbelt AMBUCS™ to share that pride as we start the New Year. We added eight new members last year. That's a record! Welcome to Zach, Suja, Jan, Marcia, J, Doug, Ed and Greg.

Speaking of new members, Cornbelt AMBUCS™ sponsored three new chapters last year. That's a record! That means there are new AMBUCS™ in three more communities doing the good work we do helping others. Welcome to Eastern Illinois AMBUCS™, Olney, IL; Grunde Area AMBUCS™, Morris, IL and Mississippi Bend AMBUCS™, Bettendorf, IA.

We had another terrific year doing the things we do best. We put twenty riders on shiny new bikes last year. We built 33 wheelchair Ramps. That's a record! And we gave Scholarship Awards totaling \$6,000 to three very deserving therapist students. That's a record! I always think of those three things as our 'core business', and business was very good for us last year. Way to go Cornbelt!

We held one of the first Trek 4 Trykes in the Nation last June. We had 25 walkers, raised \$2,942 and gave away three Amtrykes®. Since that was our first Trek 4 Trykes, all of those are records too!

One of the highlights of the year was National Conference in Biloxi, MS. We had nine members make the trip where our very own Al Bedell was installed as National President. While there, we sponsored 3 AmTrykes® at the Rodeos and were recognized as a Superior Chapter with Distinction. Three club members were recognized for making William L. White Scholarship donations. We were also recognized for surpassing the \$75,000 level of National giving since being chartered. Vicki Strauss moderated the Trek 4 Trykes Education Session and was recognized as the top Trek 4 Trykes Fundraiser. Connie Oltman was recognized as the #3 Trek 4 Trykes Fundraiser. What a week for Cornbelt!!

Last Christmas, we responded very well to the National Wish List Challenge. Cornbelt members donated \$2,800 to the National effort that raised \$151,000 and took 265 riders off the Wish List.

There were ten AmTryke® Road Shows that originated in Cornbeltland last year. There were trips to ADT in Chicago, IL; Bettendorf, IA; Tomah, WI; Lacrosse, WI (2); Lombard, IL; Easter Seals in Peoria, IL; St. Louis Chapters (2) and Morris, IL. And yes, that's a record! Two of those trips, Bettendorf, IA and Morris, IL were to groups of young therapists that became new AMBUCS™ chapters; Mississippi Bend AMBUCS™ and Grunde Area AMBUCS™.

Eleven of our members attended the Spring Conference, hosted by Champaign AMBUCS™, here in Bloomington, IL. We gave away five Amtrykes® at the conference and even signed up a new member. That was another pretty good week for us.

Last fall we made a Branding Challenge to the Pekin AMBUCS™. At stake was a trip down I-74. The losing club had to travel to the other city for a joint social at the home of the local

hockey team. We prevailed, five new members to two new members, then hosted a fun evening at a Bloomington Thunder Hockey game, with a short drive home.

Speaking of socials, we held our Annual Holiday Re-gifting Party again last January. As usual, we had a great time and recycled some pretty nice gifts.

In April we held our Annual Pancake Breakfast. Once again, it was supported by Shannon's 5 Star Restaurant. We served 200 guests and raised \$2,438, neither of those numbers were records, but they were both really close. 😊

Cornbelt AMBUCS™ was credited with \$5,604 in donations to the National Ambility Program. That's money that came from our Big Hat Club and credits from our Amtryke® activity. Our Big Hat Club and individual members donated \$9,312 to the National Scholarship program, and the club donated an additional \$1,600 to the scholarship Program. I believe both of those are records as well!

Last year we started doing quarterly service projects in the community in addition to our usual ramp, Amtryke® and scholarship activities. During the Holiday Season, we helped the Salvation Army with their Annual Bell Ringing Campaign. Members spent a few chilled evenings greeting shoppers at some local retailers. We were recognized by the local Salvation Army as their top Service Organization Fundraiser. We also spent an evening preparing a meal at the Home Sweet Home Mission in Bloomington.

We 'got the word out' in several ways last year. We staffed Information Booths at the Children's Miracle League Expo and at the Senior Expo. We also had members meet with the Town of Normal Planning Commission to discuss Chapter activities, and community impacts and needs. We improved our ramp building capability (and made Bill really happy) by upgrading our ramp trailer. We purchased a shiny new 6ft x 12ft with a higher roof; no more banging my head on the ceiling, I hope. The trailer cost us about \$2,900, but we've now got ample room for our tools AND the ability to carry lumber and preassembled ramp sections, something we've wanted for years.

We enrolled as a PayPal subscriber last year, and added a donation link to our website hoping to make it easier for generous individuals to help us with our mission. It worked. We received two \$100 donations in the first month the link was on our website.

We continue to hold our Monthly Lunch Meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at noon at Monical's Pizza near Best Buy, and our monthly Big Hat Breakfast Meetings on the third Saturday of each month at 7AM at Shannon's 5 Star Restaurant. No records here, just Cornbelt members getting together to enjoy each other's company and maybe do some good work along the way.

Wow, what a year! No doubt there were a record number of records set last year. If there's anything left in that cup (or other vessel you might have), now would be a good time to raise it in a toast to what was an outstanding year for Cornbelt AMBUCS™. I'm excited by the number of new members we have and the spirit and energy they have brought to our club, and I'm looking forward to see what we can accomplish Shoulders Together in the New Year.

Cheers !!
LT

Next Saturday Event

When: Saturday, June 18, 2016
Time: 7:00 a.m.
Place: Shannon's Restaurant

Next Noon Meeting

When: Wednesday, July 6, 2016
Time: Noon
Place: Monical's Pizza (by Best Buy)

**Bill Buchie's Babbles...**



Hey, all you ramp-builders -

We've been pretty busy building ramp this spring and we've got more to do later this summer. For a little review of what we can do when we put our "shoulders together", here's a review of our progress in the month of May.

First, we built a ramp for the Logsdon family in Bloomington. Their son called us as we had built a ramp for them previously in Normal several years ago. We utilized some ramp sections from their old ramp, added some new materials, and came up with a pretty nice looking ramp that will give them access to their new home in Bloomington. Nice work, AMBUCS™!



The second ramp was built in Normal for Ken and Sally Zuhn. They purchased a new home but needed to make some alterations so the new home was accessible. We showed up one evening to a pile of lumber in the driveway and a few hours later, a new ramp was completed in their garage. I've heard that Ken is quite pleased with his new ramp! Again, nice work, AMBUCS™!





The third ramp was built in Normal for Mr. Lenyard. He moved into a new trailer but did not have access to his new home and without a ramp, he was unable to get in and out of his new home. AMBUCS™ to the rescue! We showed up on a Saturday morning, sorted through the piles of lumber, and ended up with a very nice looking ramp for Mr. Lenyard, too. Nice work, AMBUCS™!



Our final ramp in May was built over the Memorial Day holiday weekend. We got a call from Mr. Cook, a veteran, as he was planning to come home later in June, but was being released from rehabilitation within a matter of days! I made a few calls, got some lumber delivered, and called in some favors (Thanks, fellas!), and we built a ramp in one evening. What a great way to honor a veteran and again, nice looking ramp, fellas!



We've got ramps to build and as the summer progresses, feel free to join us some Saturday or an evening. If you want to be added to the e-mail list, send me a note and I'll be sure to tell you where "the festivities" will be held!

Thanks for your willingness to help us make homes accessible for individuals in our community.. and I'll see ya' at the ramps!

Bill McHie

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Be sure to check us out on Facebook. Go to www.facebook.com/cornbeltAMBUCS

Cornbelt Buc-etin Delivery

We now post all our monthly newsletters on our website at www.cornbeltAMBUCS.org. When the newsletter is posted I send a link to everyone's email address so they can click on the link to take them directly to the newsletter. So to get your link sent to you, please email Jerry your email address at JWyrick300@ctechinternet.com.



Notes From Al...



AmTrykes®

We received six new bikes from the AMBUCS™ Resource Center last month. The bikes will be assembled and hopefully distributed to the children and one disabled vet in June. Please watch your email for the bike giveaways.

As usual, please continue to send me the contact information for anyone that our wonderful bikes could help improve their independence and mobility.

Thanks!

Al Bedell

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Donate

The Cornbelt AMBUCS™ website has been updated with a “Donate” page. This provides new ways for people to donate to us. It provides the USPS address to mail a check, and more importantly, the ability to donate via credit card or PayPal. The money goes to a PayPal account and is then transferred to our Charity checking account. The cost is 2.2% of the donation plus \$0.30 per transaction. Example, for a \$100 donation, we receive \$97.50.

The “Donate” button is on most pages, and is a menu option. We also have a card reader that attaches to a smart phone so we can receive donations at events, when appropriate. It is now easy to donate to Cornbelt AMBUCS™ – spread the word!

Check out what our neighboring AMBUCS™ club is doing. Here is the link to the Pekin club’s newsletter: <http://www.pekinAMBUCS.org/newsletter.html>