

# CORNBELT BUC-ETIN



President: Larry Turilli  
Vice President: Don Stogsdill  
Secretary: Dan Bedell  
Treasurer: David DeHaan  
Sergeant At Arms: Jeff Thompson  
Website: [www.cornbeltambucs.org](http://www.cornbeltambucs.org)

Bill McHie, At-Large Board Member  
Greg Beneze, At-Large Board Member  
Jerry Wyrick, At-Large Board Member  
Pete Hettinger, At-Large Board Member  
Al Bedell, At-Large Board Member  
Dennis Strauss, Past President



## JUNE 2011

### THE PREZ SEZ...

(Outgoing President Denny Strauss)

Two years have certainly gone by fast, and May was no exception. We finally got back into the ramp building business, building two ramps as the weather improved (see Bill's Column). We presented an AmTryke® at the Installation Banquet (see Al's Column).

**Cornbelter's Baseball** – We have a suite for the game on Thursday, June 16, at the Corn Crib in Normal. There are still a couple of tickets available for \$8 each. Contact Greg Beneze if you are interested.



**National Conference** – The AMBUCS™ National Conference for 2011 is July 20-23 in Memphis, TN. This is within driving distance. If you have never attended the National Conference before, consider this an opportunity to attend. It is an opportunity to meet AMBUCS™ from all



over the country, attend some great training sessions, and have fun in Memphis. The National website has all the exciting details: [2011 National Conference](#).

**Home Depot Grant** – Through the efforts of Al Bedell, we have received a \$2,000 grant from Home Depot. This money will be used to buy tools and materials to help in our mission to build ramps for those in need.

**Installation Banquet** – The big event for the month was the Installation/Awards Banquet – see the article below.

**From the Prez** - This is my last column as President of Cornbelt AMBUCS™. It has been my privilege to serve for two years as the President. With the support of the membership we have accomplished a lot in two years: we built 50 wheelchair ramps, provided 30 AmTrykes®, and 5 scholarships worth \$7,000. We have increased our visibility in the community through attendance at expo's and other events. We continue to fulfill our mission: "Creating Mobility and Independence for People with Disabilities".

I will continue to serve on the Board of Directors for one year as a Past President. I am confident that the new administration will continue to improve our chapter by growing our membership, building wheelchair ramps, and providing AmTrykes® and scholarships.

## 2011 Cornbelt AMBUCS™ Installation Banquet

The Cornbelt Chapter of AMBUCS™ held their Installation/Awards Banquet on Thursday, May 12, 2011 at the Ozark House Restaurant in Bloomington. We had 31 people in attendance including members, spouses, scholarship winners, and guests. Our special guests included:

- National President – Greg Ferris and wife Jan
- Family Members of Don Huber (6)
- Scholarship Recipients/Guests (6)

### AmTryke® Presentation

Prior to the dinner, we presented an AM-16 AmTryke® to 7 year old Ryan, a student at Parkside Elementary School. He was with his parents and younger sister. He was very excited to get his new AmTryke®. AmTryke® Committee Chairman, Al Bedell presented the AmTryke® to Ryan. It is always a pleasure to attend the presentation of an AmTryke® and to see the excitement and joy on the child's face.



### Dinner

We had a delicious buffet dinner of Salad, Roast Beef Au Jus, Rotisserie Chicken, Green Beans, Corn, Rolls, Cherry Cheesecake, and Apple Cobbler.

### National President Remarks

National President, Greg Ferris' remarks included some of the exploits of his recent trips



as President, including his car being in the St Louis Airport when the tornado struck. Lots of damage to his car, but he has State Farm Insurance.

He indicated that nationally, AMBUCS™ is growing, showing positive member growth for the second consecutive year, and has added 12 new chapters. People are now actually calling the National Office asking about AMBUCS™. He made a plug for the National Conference in Memphis in July. Early bird signup was still available.

He also talked about the National Wish List for AmTrykes®. There are over 500 needy kids on the list, and some have been on the list for over three years. There is now a Wish List Club dedicated to reducing the number of kids on the list. For just \$1 a day, you can become a Wish List Club member, and help fund AmTrykes® for deserving kids.

## Year in Review

- National Conference was held in Naples, Florida on July 7-11, 2010. We had three members attending. We gave an AmTryke® to a child on the Wish List during the AmTryke® Rodeo. We received four National Awards: Honor Chapter, Living Endowment, 10-24 AmTrykes®, and Local Charities Class 2 3<sup>rd</sup> place.
- We had our first social of the year at the Corn Crib for a Cornbelter's baseball game. We received recognition from the PA announcer for our Chapter. And we received one request for information on a wheelchair ramp.
- The State Farm Volunteer Fair was held again this year. We had a table at Corporate Headquarters on September 23, and at Corporate South on September 23. Thanks to Al Bedell, Dan Bedell, Jerry Wyrick, and others for manning our booth. We are now on the United Way of McLean County Volunteer website.
- Central Region Fall Conference was held in Danville on September 24-25. There was a Gilligan's Island theme for the opening night activities. Saturday morning we attended a Challenger Baseball Game. Some members participated as "buddies" for the kids. Some kids were in wheelchairs, some used walkers, and some had braces. All had a good time. It was very inspirational to see. The Danville Chapter presented an AmTryke® to a young girl at lunchtime. We received four District Awards: Chapter Web Site, Public Relations, Visibility, and Community Service.
- We were a Participating Sponsor at the Parenting and Disabilities Expo for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Access Allies of Bloomington-Normal has organized this Expo for several years. It brings together over 30 different area groups that work with people with disabilities. Greg Beneze, Vicky and Denny Strauss manned our table.
- Fall Branding was in October/November. During this time, chapters emphasize recruiting new members. We recruited 7 new members plus one in December. Al Bedell and Dennis Strauss re-Big Hatted, each recruiting three new members.
- Our Christmas Re-Gifting social was held on January 7<sup>th</sup> at the home of Al Bedell and his wife Deanna. After a delicious lasagna dinner, two new members were sworn in. The white elephant gift exchange highlighted the evening.
- February was National Visibility Month. During this period each chapter emphasizes visibility in the community. We received proclamations proclaiming February AMBUCS™ Appreciation Month from Bloomington, Normal, State of Illinois, and the Illinois General Assembly. We had chapter

information on an electronic billboard for ten days during the month.

- Our annual Pancake and Sausage Breakfast was held on April 9, 2011 at 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian Church. We had lots of volunteers, and the National President, Greg Ferris was seen eating pancakes. We swore in two new members, and raised \$2,000 for our only fundraiser of the year.
- Spring Round Up was held during March/April, where we emphasize new member recruiting. A Membership Event was held at Monical's Pizza on April 21. We provided pizza and pop, and a baseball cap with AMBUCS™ logo if you brought a potential member. Unfortunately, we did not recruit any new members during this time.
- Cornbelt AMBUCS™ hosted the Central Region Spring Conference on April 30 at the Ozark House Restaurant in Bloomington. Thirty members from the Central Region attended. The new format did not include officer training for the first time. Central Region Director, our own Al Bedell, presented the district news. National President, Greg Ferris presented national news. There was an excellent lunch and information sharing sessions to round out the day.
- The Senior Expo was held May 2 at the Parke Hotel and Conference Center. We were invited to attend this expo and had a booth manned by Carolyn Thompson, Don Stogsdill, Al Bedell, and Jerry Wyrick. The theme was "Be Content at Home" and there were 70 different groups participating. We receive good visibility at these events, and make new contacts with other groups.
- **AmTrykes®:** This year we provided 12 AmTrykes® (over \$6,700) to deserving kids. We also gave one to the Demo Site at Easter Seals in Bloomington. An AmTryke® Training Session for Therapists was held in September 2010, resulting in several candidates for AmTrykes®.
- **Ramps:** Mother Nature did not cooperate this winter. We did not build ramps in three separate months because of too much snow on the ground. We still managed to build 22 ramps during the year. Facts: \$25,000 in materials, 1300 man hours, 963 feet of ramp. Per ramp averages: 61 man hours, \$1,200 in materials, 46 feet of ramp, and 10 volunteers. Bill McHie lead the way working on 20 ramps, Lloyd Bates (18), Al Bedell (13), Don Stogsdill (11) and Dennis Strauss (11).
- In May we received a \$2,000 grant from Home Depot, in the form of a gift card. Thanks to Al Bedell for applying for this grant. It will enable us to buy tools and materials from Home Depot for our ramp building.
- Our web site continues to improve. We keep it up to date with events, and add new information almost every month. For photos of these events, and more, check out our website at: [www.cornbeltambuics.org](http://www.cornbeltambuics.org)

## Miscellaneous

At the Installation Banquet we gave away baseball caps with the Cornbelt AMBUCS™ Logo, and a couple of car magnets were presented to Bill McHie, our Ramp Committee Co-Chairman. Connie Oltman donated a vintage Cornbelt AMBUCS™ t-shirt that was raffled off for \$20 to Greg Beneze.

## Chapter Awards

### Cornbelt AMBUC™ of the Year

This year's AMBUC™ of the Year Award went to Greg Beneze. Greg has volunteered on numerous ramps, manned the State Farm Volunteer Days table, was a tireless volunteer at the Pancake Breakfast, and as Social Committee Chairman has organized outings to a Prairie Thunder Hockey game, a

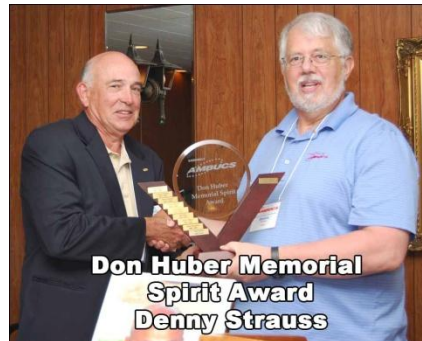
Cornbelter's Baseball game, and our Christmas social. He has been a valuable board member the last two years. Congratulations to Greg!

### **Dob Huber Memorial Spirit Award**

Al Bedell presented the Don Huber Memorial Spirit Award to Dennis Strauss.



**Cornbelt AMBUC of the Year  
Greg Beneze**



**Don Huber Memorial  
Spirit Award  
Denny Strauss**

### **Scholarships**

Larry Turilli presented these year's scholarships. Scholarship Committee Chairman Pete Hettinger was unable to attend. We were able to provide three scholarships this year totaling \$4,000.

#### **Recipients:**

- Jennifer Schultz: First Year in Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Bradley University. She received a \$1,000 Cornbelt AMBUCE™ Scholarship.
- Lori Danielle Cunningham: First Year in Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Illinois State University. She received a \$1,000 Cornbelt AMBUCE™ Scholarship.
- Christina Ryan: Graduate Student – Speech Pathology at Illinois State University. She received the Huber Scholarship in the amount of \$2,000.

Recipient gave a brief overview of themselves.



**Lori Cunningham  
Scholarship Recipient**



**Jennifer Schultz  
Scholarship Recipient**



**Christina Evans  
Huber Scholarship  
Recipient**

### **Installation of Officers**

The new officers will become effective June 1. David DeHaan, Treasurer, and Dan Bedell, Secretary, were sworn in by Central Region Director Al Bedell. Larry Turilli, President, was sworn in by National President Greg Ferris. This is the second term for David and Dan. Vice President, Don Stogsdill, was not present for the ceremony.



## President-Elect Remarks

To close out the evening, President Larry Turilli, gave his goals for the coming year. (See Larry's column) But first he received his AMBUCS™ President's Pin, and the "Book of the President" from the outgoing president, Denny Strauss.



## Spring Conference 2011

The Central Region Spring Conference was held on April 30, 2011. It was hosted by the Cornbelt Chapter at the Ozark House restaurant. The Region was responsible for all the cost. Thirty AMBUCS™ for several chapters attended the free event and fabulous lunch.

The format was different this year and only one day to reduce cost to members. Normally officer training was held at the Spring Conference, but this year the training will be done at the district level on Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup> in Pekin. So this was mostly an information meeting. We started at 9:30 am and were done by 2:00 pm.

Attending were National President Greg Ferris and his wife Jan. Our own Al Bedell is Central Region Director. District 4A brought their new 18 foot tandem axel trailer AmTryke® trailer along for all to admire, which we all did.

The agenda included:

- Regional Meeting Minutes
- Regional Treasurer Report
- National News
- Easy and fun Fund Raising Ideas
- New AmTryke® Online Ordering and New Products
- Chapter Year in Review
- Lunch
- Table Discussions
- AMBUC™ Knowledge Assessment



Al Bedell and Larry Windingland  
Conducting Region Business



National President Greg Ferris  
Giving National News



Deb Griest Being Sworn in as  
New District 4A Governor

## ***THE PREZ SEZ...***

**(Incoming President Larry Turilli)**

I want to start my first newsletter article by offering up a GREAT BIG THANKS to Denny for the work he did for our club the last two years as President. Simply put, we're a better club than we were two years ago when Denny stepped in. The basics are there like they always have been. We still build ramps, we still give away AmTrykes®, and we still give away scholarships money. But Denny has led improvements in many other areas, and that's why I say we're a better club.

If you were at our Annual Awards Banquet last month, you saw our club's display which includes large banners showing AMBUCS™ building ramps and children riding AmTrykes®, a scale model of a ramp, and even a new American Flag. We use this display throughout the year to help us get our message out to the community.

At the banquet, I also talked about our club website, [www.cornbeltambucs.org](http://www.cornbeltambucs.org). It is a great resource for our club. It's full of information about who we are and what we do. If you're not visiting the website on a regular basis, you're missing out. And if you don't occasionally mention it to a friend, you're missing an opportunity to share information about the great things we've done, and the great things we are planning to do.

Denny is responsible for building our display and our website, big improvements for our club, but that's only part of the story. Denny personally recruited new members into the club, earning himself a Big Hat. Like I said at the banquet, there's a reason AMBUCS™ has a Big Hat Club. You can't miss those hats, just like you can't miss Denny's passion for AMBUCS™. It's easy to get enthused about AMBUCS™ when you talk to Denny. It takes many people to make this club work, 'Shoulders Together' definitely applies here, but Denny has given us a 'momentum' that we haven't always had.

Thanks Denny.

So what are we going to in the next 12 months so next year we can say that we're a better club than we were in June of 2011?

I'm sure we'll build more ramps. Bill and Brian will see to that.  
I'm sure we'll give away more AmTrykes®. Al will see to that.  
I'm sure we'll give away more scholarship money. Pete will see to that.

What are the rest of us going to do? Certainly, we'll all help Bill, Brian, Al and Pete. We'll also go to the baseball or hockey games with Greg, and we'll serve pancakes together again next spring. That's all good stuff, but I'd also love to see more of you at Monical's for lunch at our first Wednesday lunch meetings. This is a club full of good people. They all care about others, like you do – or they wouldn't be members. Make sure you take the time to get to know them. Introduce yourself. Be more like Denny. Get enthused and stay enthused. Talk to people about AMBUCS™. Wear your pins. People will ask you about them, which will give you the opportunity to share your passion about AMBUCS™.

We do some really rewarding things. Who can't feel better after watching someone come down a ramp on their first trip outdoors in months, or watching a child take their first bike ride? Be a friend. Give other folks the opportunity to witness these things that we see all the time. You'll both be glad you did.

I look forward to serving you and our club over the next 12 months. I'll talk to you again right here next month. Enjoy your summer.

Larry Turilli



### **Mark your calendars!!!**

#### **Next Saturday Meeting**

When: Saturday, June 18, 2011  
Time: 7:15 a.m.  
Place: Shannon's Restaurant

#### **Next Noon Meeting**

When: Wednesday, July 6, 2011  
Time: Noon  
Place: Monical's Pizza (by Best Buy)





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

Hey, All you ramp-builders -

We had a great month... and got two more ramps built! We had a "senior day"... and got a ramp built for Mr. Hennis in Normal. The "old guys" were able to finish a ramp on a Saturday, with some nice looking railing, so Mr. Hennis can get in and out of his home. He was pleased with our work and I have to say... it's one of the best looking ramps we've done!



We were also able to work with the NiCor Gas volunteers on a Saturday in May... to build a ramp for Mrs. Thormann in Normal. We started with a pile of lumber... and ended up with a 40 ft. ramp with two platforms... and plenty of smiling faces... AMBUCS™ volunteers, Diversity project helpers, and NiCor Gas volunteers. Mrs. Thormann can finally make her way home from the nursing home where she has been for the past several months. The "shoulders together" motto from our AMBUCS™ organization was quite evident that Saturday as we finished a ramp in record time. I'm looking forward to working with the NiCor Gas folks again next year!



We've had a great year... and built plenty of ramps... but also got hit with some nasty winter weather and some rainy weather this spring, too. We've worked with lots of volunteers and made plenty of friends while helping many families to get in and out of their homes. We've watched "maiden voyages" and realized that our efforts really do make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities in our community. Hopefully, you've been a part of it. If not, there's plenty of time to get involved this year. Give me a call, show up to a ramp, come to a meeting. If you've been there, you know!... and you know we need you! I'm looking forward to another great year... with plenty of ramps yet to be built. Thank you for your help and your support... and I'll see ya' at the ramps!

Bill McHie

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### **Cornbelt Buc-etin Delivery**

We now post all our monthly newsletters on our website at [www.cornbeltambucs.org](http://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](mailto:JWyrick300@ctechinternet.com).



## **Notes from Al...**

### **AmTrykes®**

May might have seemed like a light month for AmTryke® activity to most of us. However, for Ryan Brutlag it was a great month. Yes, Ryan received his own bike from Cornbelt AMBUC™S at the installation banquet at the Ozark House. Ryan's parents and sister accompanied Ryan to the banquet to see Ryan on his new AM-16 AmTryke®.

As you can see from the pictures below Ryan was quite excited. Ryan also has wrist straps to help provide more movement with his arms and shoulders. We did try the wrist straps when Ryan was fitted for the bike with his therapist prior to the installation banquet.



Sorry but I did not get a picture but Ryan was pedaling the bike quite well in the parking lot on the way to their van. I am sure Ryan will get lots of use with the AM-16 as he has plenty of room for growth with this bike.

Cornbelt Ambucs™ also repaired an older AM-16 for Kacie at Olympia North Elementary School. We picked up the bike and had the bike back to her in just a couple days in working condition again. Cornbelt agrees to keep the bikes in working conditions as long as they are not abused. Kacie's bike just lost a bolt which connected the chain drive to the front wheel axle.

As usual, keep sending me the referrals and we will keep providing bikes. We already have one AmTryke® request the board will need to review at the June Board Meeting.

Al Bedell  
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