

Love Notes

The newsletter of the Loves Park Illinois AMBUCS™



January 2009

Creating Mobility & Independence
for People with Disabilities

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President's Message by Pat Hubly

Let me be one of the last to wish you all a *Happy New Year*. Hope your holidays were happy, healthy and blessed, and that you're ready to face 2009 with renewed enthusiasm and vigor.

It's been some time since we've talked and lots has happened within our AMBUCS™ club and family. Our Christmas party was well attended and fun with the annual white elephant auction and Harlem singers.

Our January board meeting was interesting. Sorry many of you missed it as we enjoyed a soup lunch (3 different ones) with all the trimmings, followed by an informative and interesting meeting.

A new member was sworn in at the January 8th membership meeting, the third new member for this club year.

February is National Visibility Month. We again will receive recognition with proclamations at the council meetings in Loves Park and Machesney Park. Watch the newspapers and TV for our public service announcements and information.

A slate of officers will be presented and election held at the March meeting, and all officers will be encouraged and expected to attend the Spring Training Conference April 17-18. (I forget where it's being held.)

March and April will be Spring Roundup (yes, spring is coming!) and every one is encouraged to be thinking of prospective members for this special membership drive and event. (See next page.)

At the May meeting new officers will be installed and the next thing you know, summer will be in full swing! My, the year just flies by doesn't it?

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Thank you

I would like to thank all of my Ambucs friends for their beautiful flowers, get well cards and kind wishes during my hospital stay and recovery at home. Although my recovery is taking longer than I had anticipated, each day brings much improvement. I was unable to party until midnight to ring in 2009 this year but maybe for 2010. I extend best wishes to you and your families in this New Year! God bless you.

Bobby Higginson

1/8/2008 Ambucs Meeting Recap

Speaker - Brad Shields

First of all, let me say to all of the charter members and long-time members that we are extremely grateful for the Loves Park AMBUCS™, their service to the community and the foundation set for our organization. Our community is better because of your service. You have made a huge difference and together we can do even more.

The items I'd like to talk about tonight I believe compliment each other.

The first item is **Recruiting**. We had a banner year in 2007-08 for recruiting new members. For our club to become more effective, we need to duplicate those efforts for several years. This will enable our organization to be vibrant and rejuvenated.

Those who've become AMBUCS™ recently have gotten involved and chaired committees and that is how we create good members. As everyone knows, new members and older AMBUCS™, there comes a time when you get "burnt out." Usually that occurs after chairing and being heavily involved in different events. When that time comes, we need different members to take those reins and give it their all. More members means we can allow members to take a break from being a chair and come back strong. I'd encourage members when they are feeling "burnt out" not to take a break from being a part of the organization. We need you to be the workers on the committees and be the supporters of the chair. Do not stop working. We need everyone to stay involved and play a role.

When it comes to recruiting, myself included, we tend to ask those to join that we are close to because we don't think they will think differently of us. Or we ask those that we think will say yes. Let me recommend a different way of recruiting that I think will make us more successful. Let's call it **Focus Specific Recruiting**.

What I mean by this is there are many committees that I think are vital that we don't even have. Let's think of them together and make a list. I think we can design jobs that will help our organization, and then we can go out and find experts that will be a great fit for those roles. We will be recruiting for jobs where we have holes. They will be the experts

and they will be open to us because we will tell them that they are an expert. Flattery gets you in the door sometimes.

The examples I give are not intended to say that those doing these jobs are not experts, but that they are examples for the types of people we can find. For example, there are fundraising experts out there that we could recruit to join. We don't have a public relations committee. There are experts that I believe we could get to do this. (I will talk about this later.) There are website experts and newsletter writers that could be part of our organization. If we don't seek out experts for these roles, likely they will not come from our close friends or those that we typically ask to join.

The key to recruiting is to **Just Ask! Just Ask!** We are guaranteed not to get anyone that is not asked to be an AMBUC!



How many of us mention AMBUCS™ and immediately have to explain what we are and what we do? I do every time. This is a travesty. I believe it is due to the lack of

emphasis we put on **Public Relations (PR)**.

Let me give you some examples and you tell me who it is: Who sells roses? Who has pancake day? Who has brat days? If you have old glasses, who do you give them to?

These organizations have clearly taken advantage of PR and the good things that they do in the community. We have failed to do this.

What is our biggest, well-known event called? That's right, Big Hat Raffle. It doesn't even associate our biggest public event with our organization name. No one knows what Big Hat is; that is an inside name. We need to get our name associated with such events.

This leads me to the second item which I feel is related. This is in regards to our name.



Please, if you have extreme pride in our organization, its charter, and those that founded it, do not get offended. How many of you in this room live in Loves Park? (only a few will be able to say yes to this)

Our chapter was founded in 1977, which was a different era for our region. It looked much different. The only contiguous towns were Rockford and Loves Park. Machesney Park wasn't around; Roscoe was nearly Wisconsin and the same with the other outlying towns.

Loves Park made sense then, I'm not sure it does now. Our region has changed and I think that it's time we change with it.

At first thought when I brought this up about a year ago, I had in my mind that we should be the Parks AMBUCS™. I thought this would make it more inclusive without overlapping with Rockford AMBUCS™. After much time and much consideration, I believe that we should be even more inclusive and less defined by boundaries. How many chapters does Chicagoland have? (none or few) Why not have a name inclusive enough to make them feel part of us, to have everyone who thinks they fall under our new name be available to be a member.

When recruiting, you may tell someone Loves Park AMBUCS™. If they don't live in Loves Park, they will automatically think, why would I join Loves Park AMBUCS™, that's not my

community! Let's not have that be an objection anymore. Let's be as inclusive as possible.

So I'm asking you to put aside pride or comfort and consider a change that will allow us to be more inclusive in our ever growing region.

And let's talk about Rockford AMBUCS™ for a moment. They aren't getting bigger, or recruiting, or getting young blood. Unfortunately, we don't know what is going to happen for them long term. We can only consider what is best for the communities we serve and do what we think is best for our organization to thrive.

Some possible name ideas are Rock River AMBUCS, Rock River Valley AMBUCS, Northern Illinois AMBUCS, Forest City AMBUCS, and Stateline AMBUCS. These are just ideas. I think you get the point. Let's decide together what we think it should be and get it done.

This will help our recruiting and should be done when we start to use PR to make our organization better known and the work we do to be known.

Let me finish with this. Let's get big together, let's become better known, let's raise more money, let's get more help from more people and for more people. More workers = less work per person or more workers = more done in the communities. Either way, it's good. Let's do more and be better! - Thanks.

The Board of Directors will be voting at our February 4th Board meeting on changing the name of our club. We will vote first to make a name change; we will then vote on three names to be considered. These names will be presented to the membership at the February 12th meeting, where one will be selected. Mailings and publication of proposed change will follow according to the By-Laws of our club. Name change should be completed by June 1, 2009.

We are requesting input from our membership for thoughts on this proposal to change the name of the club and also for name possibilities.

A change in name for our club is being taken seriously by the Board and with considerable thought. If after reading the above reasons for the change you have questions or concerns, please contact any one of the officers listed on the front page of this newsletter, either by phone, email or snail mail/letter.

Your input by the above methods and your attendance at the February meeting is requested and anticipated.



Belated Happy Birthday wishes to:

Pam Shields December 12
 Terry Brown (Big 6-0) December 23
 Marco Anderson December 29

Happy Birthday to:

Dave Jahn January 14
 Jason Lindstrand January 17
 Paul DeBruyne January 18
 Dan Koski January 18
 Rich Lierman January 22
 Heidi Butz January 30

Club Anniversaries

Dave Jahn December 1999
 Gary Kuhls January 1983
 Marco Anderson January 1986
 Darlene Estabrook January 1989
 Dan Schrand January 1997

Upcoming Events

Watch this space for news of local, district, regional and national upcoming events. Calendars provided so you will know exactly what day and date AMBUC events are taking place to assist you in your plans to attend.

Happy New Year January 1
January Board Meeting January 3
January Membership Meeting January 8
Calendar Social January 29
February Board Meeting February 4
February Membership Meeting February 12
March Board Meeting March 4
March Membership meeting March 12

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**MEMBER UPDATE**

Our sympathy to Terry and Karen Brown on the passing of Karen's father, Martin Doty.

Our sympathy to Pat Hubly on the passing of her mother, Maurie Elliott.

Our Sympathy to Cecil and Donna Kennington on the passing of their grandson.

**JANUARY 2009**

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**FEBRUARY 2009**

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**MARCH 2009**

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***CALENDAR REMINDER***

We are in the middle of one of our major yearly fundraisers – the Pot O' Gold calendar with drawing for cash prizes daily during February. **Please, please** sell ALL your calendars, and then sell a couple more. 400 calendars are available; if all sold, we would realize a nice profit. Call Tracy Shields at 815/540-6864 if you need more calendars. **Get your stubs and money to her by Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**. Calendar Social will be Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at the home of Terry and Karen Brown.