

Run with it!



Newsletter of A2A3 • Spring 2009

A2A3 Events at a Glance

Box Car Derby
Sat., March 28

**A2A3 at Burns Park
Run**
Sun., May 3

Pilates Class
Mon., May 4

Square Dance
Fri., May 8

**A2A3 at Dexter-
Ann Arbor Run**
Sun., May 31

**A2A3 at Big House
Big Heart Run**
Sun., October 4

Family Field Day
Sun., October 18

Don't Miss Out!

Subscribe to our Events Calendar to get occasional notifications of A2A3 events for your Google or Apple calendar. To sign up, visit www.a2a3.org.

A2A3 Ramps Up Activities in 2009

The A2A3 motto is to stay active and make every day count! We aim to encourage people to be active as a way to fight ALS, a devastating disease that takes away all capacity to be active. There are many ways to be active and to creatively raise funds in the fight against ALS. A2A3 is proud to announce partnerships with Phi Delta Theta (the U-M chapter of Lou Gehrig's fraternity) and the Washtenaw County Farm Bureau (WCFB) to bring you two very exciting events:

Box Car Derby Fundraiser March 28



A2A3 and Phi Delta Theta are co-sponsoring the **First Annual Box Car Derby on Saturday, March 28 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** The race course begins where South University meets Oxford, with a picnic immediately following on the lawn of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity house at the corner of South University Avenue and Washtenaw. Fee for the race is \$25/team, payable to A2A3. Come out and race a car or cheer on teams of local students from grammar through graduate school. For more information or to register, see www.a2a3.org.

Square Dance May 8

Yeehaw! Come join us for the ultimate family-friendly community event: **City Meets Country Square Dance Friday, May 8 from 6:30-10:30 p.m.**, at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, located at 5055 Ann Arbor Saline Rd. Cost is \$30/family, \$15/individual, payable to A2A3. Tickets include one slice of pizza, and one trip thru the ice cream sundae bar (compliments of WCFB) for each family member. All proceeds from this event will be donated to ALS TDI (Cambridge, Mass.) and the University of Michigan's Program for Neurology Research & Discovery.



Fundraising Thank You!

Because of your generous support, we are very pleased to announce that A2A3 made its first donation of \$10,500 to the ALS Therapy Development Institute (ALS TDI). These funds were matched at 100% by Augie's Quest, the Muscular Dystrophy Association's ALS research initiative. The University of Michigan's Program for Neurology Research & Development received over \$18,000 in the Fall of 2008 raised by friends and colleagues of Bob and Gretchen through the Big Heart Big House run and a community yard sale.

Individual & Team Initiatives

Monthly Pilates Class

A2A3 coach Amy Burnett will offer a one-hour Pilates class the first Monday of every month, starting **Monday, May 4**. Join Amy at The Movement Center (www.movement-center.com), 116 W. Washington (above Café Zola) at 6:30 p.m. for muscle-toning exercises that will increase both your strength and flexibility. The entire \$20 fee goes to A2A3 and ALS research. There is a six-person cap per class, so reserve your space today! Contact Amy at: amyb@movement-center.com.

Pennies for Push-ups and Sit-Ups

Members of the Dalton family are doing push-ups and sit-ups for ONE PENNY EACH! Joel and his 3rd-grade daughter Cammie will do push-ups, while 5th-grade daughter Kenzie will do sit-ups approximately every other day until the anniversary of Lou Gehrig's farewell speech on July 4. To support their push-up/sit-up frenzy and to follow their progress, visit www.a2a3.org.

Leg Pressing for A Cure

Ken Silverman, friend of Bob and Gretchen, is in training to attempt to leg press 1,000 pounds (yes, at one time!). He is looking for people/companies interested in making pledges for each pound he presses (e.g., \$.01/pound if he leg presses 1,000 pounds would be a \$10 donation).

Running Club

Running season is here so watch the A2A3 website for team-running opportunities.

More information on each of these initiatives can be found at the A2A3 website: www.a2a3.org.

A Note From Bob



There has been some exciting news on ALS the last few months, both in terms of enhanced awareness through terrific community events, and new research findings. Thanks to all of you for your incredible support of A2A3 and ALS research in general.

Gretchen, Maddie, Sophie, Marley, and I continue to enjoy the wonders of each day. Despite the challenge we have been given, our appreciation for all that we have has never been greater. We are fortunate that, to date, the disease has not progressed more rapidly. My right hand and arm are pretty weak, but it is not affecting most of my functioning. In fact, I just signed up for an over-40 indoor soccer league! And

Gretchen has set a goal of running a half-marathon. Spring is not too far off, which means soccer and field hockey for the girls. Trying to stay active, I will be coaching Sophie's field hockey team and helping with one of Maddie's soccer teams. As always, Gretchen will also help coach field hockey.

Thanks again for all that you do, and stay active!

Bob



ALS in the News

A2A3 is currently committed to supporting the research efforts of two organizations: ALS Therapy Development Institute (ALS TDI) in Cambridge, Mass. and the U-M's Program for Neurology Research & Discovery.

Promising Research at ALS TDI

The mission of ALS TDI is to develop effective therapeutics that stop ALS as soon as possible. We are the world's only non-profit biotechnology company with more than 30 professional scientists focused solely on this goal. ALS TDI is unique in that we combine the passion and dedication of a nonprofit organization with the entrepreneurial and scientific spirit of a biotech company.

At ALS TDI we sift through the most recent research to determine what existing compounds might be the most efficacious. Our team has a multi-prong ability to validate therapeutics, including small molecules, gene therapies and cell-based constructs, testing dozens of potential therapeutics each year. Currently we have more than 40 promising projects at various stages of research at our state-of-the-art facility.

On Thursday, June 18, we will be in Novi (Mich.) to lead an ALS 101 seminar, which provides information about the biology of ALS, the state of current research and resources for living with the disease. The seminar is free and open to the public. For more information about ALS TDI or the 101 seminar, please visit www.als.net.

Program for Neurology Research & Discovery: Relentless Progress in the Fight Against ALS

The scientists at the University of Michigan's Program for Neurology Research & Discovery seek to apply the latest medical breakthroughs to understand and treat the terrible disease that is ALS. With the passage of Proposal 2, we are now able to create our own stem cell lines, with which we are developing new therapies to maintain the health of nerve cells in patients with ALS. Our preliminary research shows that animals with ALS retain their ability to move and live much longer after they receive stem cell therapy.

We are also applying a technique called gene therapy to deliver a family of growth factors, which allow nerve cells to remain healthy even in the hostile environment caused by the disease. The idea behind gene therapy is straightforward: Take a common virus, replace the infectious part of the virus with good genes – and the result, a virus that makes a beneficial protein.

We have created new panels of viruses, growth factors and an animal model of ALS. The most promising of these is the tiny zebra fish – an organism that is very similar to a mammal in development and physiology but matures much more quickly. Its genes can be easily manipulated to create models for diseases such as ALS and will allow us to screen potential therapies.

In these, and many other ways, at the Program for Neurology Research & Discovery we are getting closer every day to our ultimate goal: an effective treatment for ALS. Please visit us at www.pnrd.umich.edu.

Meet the A2A3 Board

Following is a list of the A2A3 board members. For each member's bio, please visit www.a2a3.org.

Suzanne Ross
President

Joel Dalton
President-Elect

Kristin McGuire
Secretary

Cathy Shakespeare
Treasurer

Diana Bowen

Jackie Dalton

Kristen Freshley

Caren Goldberg

Knut Hill

David Lowenschuss

Kate McGonagle

Susan Miller

Gayle Rosen

Raleigh Sadlier

Laura Stidham

Watch our website for more details on these exciting upcoming events...

Film Showing at Michigan Theater

In early June, A2A3 will bring the award-winning documentary, *Indestructible* to Ann Arbor. Created by filmmaker Ben Byer after his own diagnosis with ALS, the film chronicles the physical and emotional journeys of patients living with ALS.

June



To honor the 70th Anniversary (July 4, 2009) of Lou Gehrig's retirement from baseball, Major League Baseball has teamed with ALS organizations to raise awareness of and funds for ALS. At each Major League ballpark hosting a game on July 4, Lou Gehrig's farewell speech will be recited. This would be a great day to go to see a baseball game, watch the classic movie "Pride of the Yankees" or host your own barbecue to celebrate this event. For more information, please visit www.als.net.

July

Family Field Day!

Our 2nd annual **Family Field Day** will take place on **Sunday, October 18** at Burns Park. We are planning another fun afternoon of games and activities for children and adults of all ages!

October

Contact Us
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Help Us Save Some Trees!

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