

# Let's Go!

**ACTIVE  
AGAINST  
ALS**



ANN ARBOR NEWSLETTER  
FALL 2014



## The Power of the Electric Bolt

**On Sunday, July 27, nearly 500 runners and walkers participated in the 4th Annual Electric Bolt 8K and 5K run/walk to raise funds for ALS research.**

Over the past four years, under the stewardship of Active Against ALS, the Ann Arbor Track Club, and the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (NJATC), the Electric Bolt has grown from a pleasant, small 5K race in Gallup Park into a popular two race event for runners and walkers with two scenic and interesting courses (including a rare 8K), passing through three City of Ann Arbor parks along the Huron River, circling Argo Pond and finishing in Kerrytown.

Many Electric Bolt participants, whether local or in town from across the nation for the NJATC's weeklong National Training Institute (NTI), are personally connected to, and

donate or raise funds for, ALS. For example, Ann Arbor's Team Schoeni, made up of players coached by Bob over the years, has raised \$7,000 in two years. In addition, NTI participant Jerri Champlin has led Team NJATC and a few out-of-state union locals to raise several thousand dollars in extra donations as well. Many other individuals have added to this haul for ALS research with their own personal fundraising.

This growth in participation and fundraising would not have happened



without the generous sponsorship by NJATC and their partners, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), American Technical Publishers (ATP), UL, and others. Even with logistical costs of staging a race across three parks and down city streets, the Electric Bolt has become the largest ongoing annual fundraiser for Active Against ALS, raising approximately \$50,000 over the last two years!

We look forward to more tremendous support and participation from our NJATC/NECA/IBEW partners, who will now be known as the Electrical Training Alliance. Just as importantly, we thank our amazingly dedicated Electric Bolt volunteers: course marshals, aid station volunteers, start and finish crews and more – and hope to see those veterans in the future. With race improvements for next year already in the works, the Electric Bolt is poised for even bigger things to come!



### Have you taken the Ice Bucket Challenge?

Who knew a little bucket of ice and water could make such an enormous difference on raising awareness and funds for ALS!

To date, Ann Arbor Active Against ALS has received more than **\$14,000** in Ice Bucket Challenge donations.

To learn more about the Ice Bucket Challenge and to see videos, photos, and messages in honor of loved ones, please visit our [website](http://www.ActiveAgainstALS.org).



# Summer reflections from Bob

## Carpe diem!

The highlight of the summer was a family vacation to South America. In Quito, Ecuador, we visited the equator, the main square with colonial-style architecture, and several Catholic churches. We spent a week cruising the Galapagos Islands. The wildlife was amazing, and we hiked and snorkeled twice a day. With a bit of help from Gretchen I was able to snorkel alongside the girls and the sea turtles, sea lions, and tropical fish.

Our last stop was Cusco and Machu Picchu in Peru where we learned a great deal about the Incan Empire and Quechua culture and history. The highlight of Peru was our daughters' hike to the peak of Huaynapicchu, which is the mountain that overlooks Machu Picchu (in the background of our family picture at right).

Gretchen and I had been planning the trip to South America for many months, and at least twice I called it off. I didn't think my body could handle walking on uneven ground and stairways, the high altitudes, and the chance of infection. I also dreaded lugging a heavy BiPAP machine and preparing the medicinal tea I drink daily. Ultimately, the desire

to embrace this experience with the girls outweighed the concerns. And I was inspired by fellow ALS patient and former NFL player Steve Gleason who made the trek to Machu Picchu under more challenging circumstances. (You can watch his adventure film [here](#).) So we went for it, and I'm incredibly glad we did!

When I used to drop the girls at school, the last thing I said to them was Carpe Diem!, a saying made famous by the movie *Dead Poets Society*. The recent death of Robin Williams and our decision to travel to South America caused me to reflect on this saying. I find the key scene in the movie incredibly powerful. John Keating (played by Robin Williams) asks a student to read aloud the first verse of Robert Herrick's poem *To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time*, after which Keating tells his students... "We are food for worms, lads. 'Cause believe it or not, each and every one of us in this room is going to stop breathing, turn cold, and die."

Contemplating death is not fun, but given my diagnosis, thinking about my own mortality is inescapable. But perhaps more than anything, these reflections sharpen my awareness of each day. I strive to be ever in the moment and carpe diem! Seeing the expressions of joy and accomplishment on the faces of Maddie and Sophie as they returned from their ascent of Huaynapicchu was a moment that I seized and adored.



## Go Mount Lebanon Swim Club!

On Sept. 20, over 100 swimmers in Pennsylvania will be swimming to raise money for Ann Arbor Active Against ALS. High school students Hannah Bumgarner and Emma Buerger wanted to inspire fellow swimmers to swim laps for charity. They chose Active Against ALS because of Bob's formative coaching when Hannah lived in Ann Arbor some years ago. They hope to raise at least \$5,000 and to help spread the word for ALS! Support the team with a donation [now](#).



# Thank You



## BOX CAR DERBY

Luckily, Box Car Derby fans are diehards! March 29 was a chilly Saturday, and yet over 30 teams participated in the race down South University. Kids, adults, and fraternity members had a rip roaring fun time as they cheered on their favorite teams. Congratulations to the "Daschunds" (pronounced DashHounds) who won the overall race for the second year in a row! Those who stuck around enjoyed an impromptu competition between fraternity and sorority members racing down a challenging and hilarious obstacle course. Many thanks to the Phi Delta brothers for their great partnership and to all of our supporters and volunteers who make this wacky day happen every year.

## TWINKIE RUN

The 5th Annual Twinkie Run was a great success! On April 1, nearly 500 participants ran a new course at Gallup Park. Next year, we promise that Twinkie grilling will go faster! The Twinkie Run has been featured recently in a new book, [The Runner's Bucket List](#), as well as in a May, 2014 [Men's Health article](#)! Thank you very much to our generous sponsors: Jyco Sealing Technologies, Dakotech, Transition Rack, and Ajax Spring! The Twinkie Run would be only a dream without their amazing, continued support. To see photos and video, click [here](#).

TO EVERYONE WHO HAS DONATED, VOLUNTEERED, OR SPONSORED AN EVENT OR PLANNED AN EVENT OF YOUR OWN. WE HAVE NOW RAISED MORE THAN **\$300,000** FOR ALS RESEARCH!



## VIVIAN'S YARD SALE

Vivian's yard sale was the essence of a community event. Family and friends came together to support the ideals of this dedicated 5th grader who wanted to help make a difference. A beautiful day, two yards full of donated items for sale, volunteers to explain that this was a charity yard sale for ALS research, music, and good spirits made this an extraordinary day. The sale raised over \$2,400. Thank you, Vivian, for your vision and your energy!



## BUHR SHARKS SWIM-A-THON

On a cool morning in July, 43 Buhr Park Sharks tore up the lanes at Buhr Pool at the 5th Annual Swim-A-Thon. In just a few hours, these young people swam a remarkable 6,350 lengths – that's over 88 miles!! These impressive kids swam an average of over two miles each! Many thanks to the coaches, parents, and volunteers who continue to make the Buhr Sharks Swim-A-Thon a fun, successful, and ACTIVE event.

## Events at a Glance

### WHOLE FOODS DAY

Thursday, September 18

### MOUNT LEBANON AQUA CLUB SWIM-A-THON (PA)

Saturday, September 20

### 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FAMILY FIELD DAY

Sunday, September 28

### BEERFEST

Saturday, October 18

### 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL RIVALRY RIDE

Saturday, October 25

## 2nd Annual BEERFEST Saturday, October 18



The 2nd Annual Burns Park Brewers Beerfest is a fundraiser and celebration of local homebrews (including a non-alcoholic root beer). In 2013, the Beerfest raised over \$5,200.00 in just 5 hours. Like a big, backyard gathering of friends with great beers, Beerfest features live music, a chili and cornbread cook-off, and a family-friendly setting. Beers are sold by the pint and we will be selling chili, cornbread, grilled foods, and homemade soft pretzels.

The Burns Park Brewers are our neighbors and friends who have become expert in the art of brewing many types of craft beers. They have been preparing for the 2014 Beerfest for months and have more than 50 gallons of homebrew that will be at its prime on October 18. All of the brewers donate their time and their finished products so that all proceeds from Beerfest are donated to Active Against ALS. Anyone can enter the chili and cornbread cook-off and we welcome inquiries from other brewers who are interested in donating to Beerfest.

To purchase/pre-order your pints, click [here](#).

More Beerfest details and links to all sign-up forms including volunteering or participating in the cook-offs will be posted on our [website](#).

Beerfest organizers can be reached by emailing Jackie at [a2boss@gmail.com](mailto:a2boss@gmail.com).

*Ann Arbor*  
**ACTIVE  
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RAISING FUNDS. RAISING HOPE.

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*Whole Foods Day*

Thursday, September 18

SHOP and MAKE A DIFFERENCE. On September 18, 5% of sales at the Washtenaw Whole Foods Market will be donated to Active Against ALS.

*Family Field Day*

Sunday, September 28

Come play at the park at the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Family Field Day. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

*Beerfest*

Saturday, October 18

Back by popular demand! Come drink locally brewed beer at our very own Ann Arbor Beerfest at Burns Park.

*Rivalry Ride*

Saturday, October 25

Save the Date! Sam Sugerman and friends will be riding again on the day of the UM-MSU football game. Please join them! Email [RivalryRide@a2a3.org](mailto:RivalryRide@a2a3.org) for more information.

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