



Run with it!

Newsletter of A2A3 • Fall 2009

A2A3 Events at a Glance

**A2A3 at Big House
Big Heart
Sun., Oct. 4**

**2nd Annual
Family Field Day
Sun., Oct. 18**

**A2A3 at Detroit
Marathon
Sun., Oct. 18**

**Buy Local - Support
A2A3
Throughout November**

**Whole Foods 5% Day
Watch for details**

**2nd Annual
Box Car Derby
Spring 2010**

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.

Family Field Day: Sun., Oct. 18!

1:00-4:00 p.m. at Burns Park

This is a great time for kids and adults of all ages! **Family Field Day** has something for everyone, including sports clinics (field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, football and basketball), kickball, crazy relays and a scavenger hunt. Look for delicious brats and root beer floats on sale, as well as baked goods, t-shirts, bandanas and books on ALS. Suggested donation: **\$20/family, \$10/individual until Oct. 11; \$25/family, \$15/individual after Oct. 11.** For more information or to register, please visit www.a2a3.org or email FamilyField-Day@a2a3.org. We hope to see you there!

A2A3 Spring Events Wrap-up

What fun community events we had this spring! In March, 16 teams competed in the **1st Annual Box Car Derby** co-sponsored with the U-M Chapter of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity. This successful day has led to a great partnership, and two fraternity members are now A2A3 board members so that we can work together in the fight against ALS. The **Square Dance** in May, in partnership with the Washtenaw County Farm Bureau, brought people together to spin and twirl for a great cause. Both kids and adults had a blast



with caller Luke Schaible (<http://www.michiganfarmbureau.com/counties/newsletter/81>). In June, people gathered at the Michigan Theater to view and discuss **Indestructible** (<http://www.indestructiblefilm.com>), a powerful movie about the journey of filmmaker Ben Byer who was diagnosed with ALS at age 31. A panel discussion with Dr. Eva Feldman (U-M PNRD) and Dr. John McCarty (ALS TDI) followed the film. In early July, we participated in the **1st Annual Vintage Baseball Game** in Canton, Mich. organized by ALS TDI. And back here in A2, two of Bob's field hockey players, Leah Webber and Zoe Sunahara, set up a table at the **Kids' Art Fair** during the Townie Street Party and sold their work to benefit ALS research. Whew! We thank you all for your tremendous support this spring – whether you volunteered, participated or donated! **To see more photos of our events, visit www.a2a3.org.**





Thanks to all of the
support, we have
donated

\$24,500

to ALS research in our
first seven months!

Team Initiatives

Coaching for a Cure

In the past year, families have honored more than 50 Rec & Ed coaches with contributions to A2A3, totaling nearly \$3,000. These donations are a powerful tribute to the important role that Rec & Ed volunteer coaches play in the lives of our children. They are also a meaningful way to honor the many athletes who have suffered from ALS, this devastating disease that takes away the capacity to be active. Thank you coaches, parents, and Rec & Ed!

Training for a Cure

The A2A3 running club is up and running! We will hold training sessions every Sunday evening, 6:30 p.m. at Burns Park through the fall, weather permitting. No need to sign up – just meet us at the flag pole. Open to all ages and all abilities! Can't make that time – we have routes and training tips all ready for you! Email us at running@a2a3.org to find out more.

Do you want to train for an event or add a new activity to your life? We have coaches who will donate their time to help you get into shape or prepare for a competition. Email us at a2a3training@a2a3.org and we will put you in touch with the right personal trainer.

A Note From Bob



With the arrival of fall and the return to school, we look back at a wonderful and active summer. We started the summer with an exciting visit to the White House to have lunch with our friend and Burns Park neighbor Michael Barr who is working in the Obama Administration. We stayed active with great softball seasons for Maddie and Sophie; backcountry camping on Lake Michigan; a trip up north; lots of bike rides and runs and walks; and other great visits with friends. We are thankful for all of you who helped us enjoy our summer, and we hope you too have had a summer with great outdoor time with family and friends.

The fun doesn't end with the summer! A2A3 will be hosting several wonderful events this fall, including a team at the Big House Big Heart race and the second annual Family Field Day. We hope to see you there! I look forward to coaching field hockey this fall, and Gretchen will be running her first-ever half marathon in Detroit this October. She has been training hard with the support of her early-morning running partners and A2A3 running coaches.

A2A3 means a great deal to us. The friends who started A2A3 have shown tremendous compassion to our family and other families dealing with ALS. They have demonstrated the value of compassion not only to Gretchen and me, but to our daughters, and to our daughters' friends. They have explicitly reached out to children to engage them in A2A3 activities. I believe A2A3 will have lasting positive effects on these children for the rest of their lives, encouraging them to reach out to friends and community members in need, and to realize we live a much richer life if we understand that we are all in this together. I firmly believe that community support has helped me and my fight with this disease.

Thank you again for all of your support to A2A3!

Bob

ALS Research News

AZA3 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.

ALS TDI Finds Drug that Slows ALS Down and Extends Life in Mouse Model

At the ALS Therapy Development Institute, we have focused for ten years on screening FDA approved and experimental drugs for their potential to slow or stop ALS. After years of meticulous work, we recently announced the exciting news that we have what is termed a 'lead candidate' in the drug industry. This promising complex protein, known as *ALS TDI 00846*, has been shown to increase survival and slow progression of the disease in the internationally recognized and leading preclinical ALS mouse model. In fact, the results observed thus far in testing show this molecule to have greater statistical relevance than any of the other 100 molecules the Institute has tested before. Management at ALS TDI is now working to partner with a pharmaceutical company in order to bring this promising molecule to the clinic.



While we move forward on that hopeful front, we also continue to advance dozens of other projects through the lab, the most rigorous validation effort in the field of ALS research. We depend on grass-roots fundraising, and these projects are only possible thanks to the support we receive from community organizations such as A2A3.

Another way to better understand our research is to visit the 10-minute virtual tour of our cutting edge labs on our website (<http://www.als.net/OurResearch/VirtualLabTour>).

Zebrafish: A Potent New Weapon against ALS

The struggle to understand and find a cure for ALS is a long and difficult one, as it is for most human diseases. But at the University of Michigan Program for Neurology Research & Discovery, we have devised a unique weapon for combating ALS. Our newest allies are the tiny Zebrafish, which make an ideal animal model for ALS, with distinct advantages over the traditional mice and rats.



Zebrafish are easy to fertilize (it can be done externally!) and develop quickly. We can produce many generations in a short period of time, allowing us to develop a sophisticated line of ALS fish. We can easily observe the processes of the disease since zebrafish are transparent, and we can test out new medications by simply adding them to the water.

We have produced our ALS zebrafish model by creating fish embryos with a mutation associated with human familial ALS. We can observe motor neuron deficits during the development of these fish, which will help us diagnose the disease earlier in humans. The 2-inch disease fighters will also allow us to screen large numbers of potential compounds to use as drugs against ALS. They might be small, but they could prove the biggest thing yet in ALS research. For more information: www.pnrd.umich.edu.

Thank You, Sponsors!

Please thank our generous sponsors when you see them.

- Arbor Vacuum
- Better Health Store
- Borders
- Busch's (Main St.)
- Caribou Coffee
- Community Technical Outreach
- Dollar Bill
- Jack's Hardware
- Kroger's (Maple Rd.)
- Learning Express
- Meijer (Ann Arbor-Saline Rd.)
- Morgan & York
- Nicola's Books
- Paragon Display Group (Formerly Foto 1)
- Paula's Place
- Pizza House
- Rudy's Hot Dogs (Toledo, Ohio)
- Running Fit
- Stadium Market
- School-Tech
- Washtenaw Co. Farm Bureau
- Zingerman's Bakery

More fun ways to support A2A3...check out www.a2a3.org for more details!

Baking for Bob

Do high-calorie baked goods make you drool? Then check out some ZERO CALORIE sweet treats from the Sweet Thoughts Bakery at www.a2a3.org. Creatively designed by Mary Ann Glynn and Jane Dutton, this virtual bake sale is a fun and calorie-free way to support A2A3.

Big House Big Heart

Come walk, run or volunteer with us on Oct. 4! In its 3rd year, the Big House Big Heart – with a finish right in the Michigan Big House – has become a huge success in raising funds and awareness for ALS. Please visit <http://www.a2a3.org/a2a3-at-the-2009-big-house-big-heart-race/> to register or for more information.

Detroit Marathon

We have 7 people running in the Detroit Marathon on Sun., Oct. 18, some of them for the first time! Please consider supporting their efforts by making a donation to A2A3 (www.a2a3.org), or cheer them on if you are in the area.

Whole Foods 5% Day

We're excited to announce that Whole Foods (on Washtenaw Ave.) recently selected A2A3 as the recipient of 5% of their proceeds for a selected day!

Watch for the A2A3 Whole Foods 5% Day announcement in early 2010.

Contact Us



**ANN ARBOR
Active Against ALS**

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Buy local and support A2A3!

The following local businesses have generously agreed to donate a percentage of their profits to A2A3 during the month of November:

**Morgan & York • Better Health • Nicola's
Learning Express • Running Fit**

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