



Run with it!

Newsletter of A2A3 • Fall 2010

A2A3 Events at a Glance

**A2A3 at Big House
Big Heart Run
Sun., October 3**

**3rd Annual Family
Field Day
Sun., October 17**

**A2A3 Masters Swim
Holiday Relays
Sun., December 12**

**3rd Annual Box Car
Derby
Sat., March 26**

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.

3rd Annual Family Field Day - Oct. 17

1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Burns Park Shelter & Fields

Join us at the 3rd Annual Family Field Day! We will again have sports clinics (field hockey, flag football, lacrosse, soccer). New this year: Strength & Conditioning Clinic for adults and kids by Annie Rubin (<http://steepsfitness.com/>) and a Pétanque Tournament. There will be grilled food, root beer floats and baked goods for sale, as well as t-shirts and PUMPKINS! Suggested Donation: \$25/family, \$15/individual. Go to www.a2a3.org for more information or to preregister.

Spring 2010 Wrap-up!

A2A3 supporter **Matt Barnes** had a great run at the Boston Marathon on April 9, finishing in 4:05:47. He raised awareness by running in an awesome Joel Dalton-designed shirt and raised funds for A2A3. Thank you, Matt!



Kappa Sigma Fraternity at Ohio State University

Kappa Sigma at OSU puts compassion ahead of rivalry. In May, the fraternity hosted the 1st Annual Silent Auction to benefit A2A3 and ALSA - Southern Ohio Chapter. Thank you, Kappa Sigma. We're looking forward to next year!

Congratulations to the **Burns Park Run** for another successful race! A2A3 received \$1,200 through their Run For Charity option. Many, many thanks!

In May the **Tappan Enough! Club** sold cool reusable water bottles and donated \$2,222.22 to A2A3! What an honor it was to work with this talented and committed group of students as well as their tireless leader, Laura Roth.



Last but not least, we want to thank **Anuja Rajendra**, the founder of Bollyfit Fitness Through Dance. Anuja's sparkling personality and contagious enthusiasm left everyone smiling during the May I Have This Dance? evening in June. We appreciate her donating part of the proceeds of this energizing event to A2A3.



Thank you
for your
support! To
date A2A3
has donated
\$54,000 to
ALS research.

A Note from Bob

When my friends and neighbors created A2A3, their goal was to help raise urgently needed funds for ALS research. Like so many, they want desperately to help find a cure or effective treatment for ALS. But what our friends may not have known was that by creating A2A3 and demonstrating compassion, they had in fact already begun administering an effective treatment.

We are all aware of the importance of medical treatments, and we know that extensive research supports the beneficial effects of various drugs and medical procedures for specific health conditions. We are less aware of the extensive scientific literature that examines the impact of social support (help and compassion) on health. Through my own research on the connections between socioeconomic factors and health, this is an area that I have become familiar with over the past decade.

Numerous hypotheses exist to explain the link between social support and health. I leave it to the references listed below for a more thorough treatment, but I will mention a few here. First, friends and family can provide information that allows individuals to make better decisions about their treatment options. An assessment of potential treatments conducted by our friends soon after I was diagnosed is an excellent example of this, and it helped our family tremendously in the first weeks after diagnosis. Second, support networks provide needed resources such as caregiving, financial support, meals, housing, and transportation that allow individuals who have a disease or are disabled to continue to function and have meaning in their lives. A more recent literature has focused on the effects of stress, claiming that social support reduces stress, which can have beneficial effects on different biological systems.

Hundreds of empirical studies have tried to determine whether social support has a causal and beneficial impact on health. But, for ethical and practical reasons, it's difficult to conduct a randomized study, where some individuals receive social support and others do not. As a result, most of the studies use what we call non-experimental or observational approaches to determine causal effects. The weight of the evidence across these hundreds of studies – studies that have examined people in numerous countries with varying diseases – suggests that social support does indeed improve health and well-being. This work is confirmed in animal models where true experiments can be conducted by, for example, taking away important members of a social support network within a clan and then examining the subsequent mortality of the remaining animals.

A2A3 will continue to support efforts to find a medical treatment that can effectively cure or reduce the speed of progression of ALS, and there are a few promising new studies underway that A2A3 is supporting. Yet we recognize that it will take years to determine whether these new treatments are effective and, if they are, bring them to market. Given that the typical patient with ALS survives only a few years after diagnosis, friends and families can feel helpless. Based on our own personal experience with this disease as well as evidence from numerous studies, I believe that social support is one of the most important treatments we have available to us, not only for ALS but for almost any disease.



Bob Schoeni (second from left) shares a laugh with Jackie Dalton, David Lowenschuss and Theresa Kubiak at the Buhr Park Sharks swim-a-thon July 13.

Suicide: a study in sociology. Emile Durkheim. The Free Press. 1951.

"Social networks, host resistance, and mortality: a nine-year follow-up study of Alameda County residents." Lisa Berkman and Leonard Syme. *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 109(2):186-204, 1979.

"Social relationships and health." James House, Karl Landis, and Debra Umberson. *Science*. 241:540-545, 1988

Social support and physical health: Understanding the health consequences of our relationships. Bert Uchino. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2004.



When friends started asking him to do it for them, Max knew this was it! With friends Christian Dupps and Alex Semancik, they decided to manufacture and sell “soft shoes.” The shoes, which they sold for 50 cents, were made with paper towels and duct tape, and many found them “very comfy.” In addition to raising money, the boys raised awareness about ALS by talking to their classmates.

New from A2A3...

Master Swim Holiday Relays Set for Dec. 12

A2A3 presents our first Holiday Relays at Skyline H.S. on Sunday, Dec. 12. This is a U.S. Masters Swimming (USMS)-sanctioned charity event. Events will include all standard USMS relays (200, 400, 800 free relays and 200, 400 medleys), plus six non-traditional/fun relays. The entry fee is \$40 per swimmer which includes six relay swims (5 of your choice + the optional t-shirt relay) and an event t-shirt. All proceeds benefit ALS research! Bring your friends and teammates...or come solo and we'll put non-traditional relay teams together for you.

We Want Your Feedback!

We've partnered with a team of MBA students from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan to collect your feedback about member communication, current fundraising activities & ideas for future events. Your survey will arrive via email or U.S. mail in the coming weeks. All comments are appreciated!

New T-shirts

Made from moisture-wicking technical fabric, these great running shirts cost just \$11.99! Available in youth and adult sizes. Go to www.a2a3.org to order yours today!



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