

AMBUNK

Week of:
July 25, 2022

GREAT PLAINS AMBUCS NEWSLETTER

A publication of
Great Plains AMBUCS
Lawton, OK
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THIS WEEK

The July 25, 2022 club meeting was called to order by Jenny Clement-Shaw. Jeff Sadler led the group in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.



Rob Rooker

Rob Rooker, the southwest director for the Oklahoma Parkinson's Alliance, was the guest speaker. His goal was to explain what Parkinson's is, in language we can understand. He said it's a progressive brain disorder that occurs when a patient's brain does not produce enough dopamine, requiring the chemical to be replaced. Rooker said research has not revealed an exact cause for Parkinson's, but it's commonly a result of head injuries and exposure to Agent Orange. He said it's not genetic, as he is the only sibling of four brothers to suffer from the disorder. He was diagnosed six years ago after visiting three doctors.

Rooker said many people associate tremors or shaking with Parkinson's, which affects about 75-percent of patients. While he is not affected by tremors, Rooker said he suffers from stiffness that is worsening in his legs and lower back. It affects each person differently. Medication is a near constant part of life for Rooker, even requiring him to wake up at midnight as part of his four times a day dosage.

Families of Parkinson's patients are also impacted by the disease. Rooker refers to his wife as his "care partner," although he's working to keep his independence as long as he can. He jokingly said to avoid him if you see him driving his red Hyundai Elantra on the road.

Rooker began working with the Oklahoma Parkinson's Foundation, now the Alliance, in 2015 when he noticed the only support group in town was not very active. Today, he said there are three support groups. They've partnered with the YMCA for the Rock Steady boxing program, and Southwestern Medical Center for the SPEAK OUT!® & The LOUD Crowd® training for Parkinson's patients. The Alliance has been able to help fund the programs through its annual walk and "Ugly Man" contest. The latter, Rooker said, is not a beauty contest, but rather a competition among participants to see who can raise the most money for Parkinson's care and research.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- National Conference is rapidly approaching August 23 - 27 in Birmingham, Alabama. Of the 212 registrants as of Monday, 80 are from the Great Plains Region.
- Details to come at Monday's meeting for a district ramp build project. Kelly Harris planned to meet with the other Lawton clubs last Thursday to work out pre-build and final construction plans. The project is expected to generate visibility in the community due to publicity the recipient has received from local media.

SPARK OF THE WEEK

David Denham was selected for the Spark, or Flame of the Week, as Jenny alternately calls it. Denham is a past president of the chapter and currently serves as the chair of the Membership Committee. Even though he said he's only put in about 15 minutes of committee work, the chapter has already welcomed several new members this organizational year. He has a few recruiting ideas to pursue, including a cookout, or similar event, at Elmer Thomas Park to invite people to learn about Great Plains AMBUCS.

GUESTS

David Madigan
Sponsored by Hossein Moini

Amari Espinal
Application Submitted
Sponsored by Paul Warmuskerken

MONTHLY SOCIAL

Members gathered on Wednesday for the monthly trivia social. The event was hosted by Southwest Sales, the Coors distributor we work with at Freedom Fest. Jenny said it was one of, if not the best member turnouts for a social. Members were treated to cold brews, delicious pulled pork smoked by the staff at Southwest Sales and a tour of the warehouse. Paul Warmuskerken presided over the beer themed trivia contest, which ended with David Denham answering the most questions correctly.



50/50

David Madigan drew the Four of Hearts. The pot stood at \$316.

NEWSLETTER

Paul Warmuskerken had the winning ticket and his copy of AMBUNK.