

# AMBUNK

## GREAT PLAINS AMBUCS NEWSLETTER

Week of:  
June 20, 2022

A publication of  
Great Plains AMBUCS  
Lawton, OK  
Edited by Monte Brown  
greatplainsambucs@gmail.com

### THIS WEEK

The June 20, 2022 club meeting was called to order by Jenny Clement-Shaw. Mary Fuller led the group in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Michael McGill and Zac Christianson with School of Athens were the guest speakers. Their organization is a nonprofit charity that helps disadvantaged children and military veterans. Its mission is to provide all children with an equal opportunity at life. They've made that happen in many different ways, to include providing school lunches, backpacks and humanitarian aid to children impacted by hurricanes.

McGill and Christianson are both active duty soldiers. When McGill started School of Athens in 2008, he would identify a need in the community and secretly work to solve it. His efforts attracted news coverage after working with the Ronald McDonald House, which led him to form a nonprofit organization. With the help of a board of directors and volunteers, they were able to take on larger and more organized projects.

Christianson became involved with the group in 2018. He said one of the first major projects he worked on was to provide uniforms for 220 students at Lincoln Elementary School. Later, when the group learned students were eating uneaten food from their classmates' plates, they raised money to pay their cafeteria debt and add money to their commissary accounts. McGill said they eventually paid off cafeteria debts for two-thousand students from 16 schools in Oklahoma and his native state of Mississippi.

McGill said School of Athens has become a force multiplier by working with other charitable organizations. When the group Farm to Families brought in thousands of pounds of potatoes to distribute to the community, McGill and Christianson divided a portion and delivered them to feeding kitchens throughout Lawton. Additionally, they've provided towels and Halloween costumes for girls staying in a local shelter.

Christianson said they've also worked with Wreaths Across America to raise funds to place nearly 150 Christmas wreaths on the headstones of soldiers at the Fort Sill Post Cemetery.

The group's efforts extend internationally. McGill's travels to Africa led to him working with a school in Uganda. He said



Zac Christianson and Michael McGill explain how their organization, School of Athens, is impacting children and military veterans in Lawton-Fort Sill and beyond.

he was able to coordinate the donation of over 200 pounds of rice, as well as cups and plates, for children at the school.

School of Athens' primary revenue source is through contributions made on Facebook. Whenever an organization reaches out with a need, Christianson said they turn to the community for help with funding that need.

McGill said he will be retiring from the Army in six months. He plans to hand over the operation of School of Athens to Christianson before returning to south Mississippi where he plans to start a similar nonprofit organization. He hopes his son, who's been volunteering since he was a young child, will join the military and later form another nonprofit near his duty station.



The Lawton-Fort Sill Freedom Fest is this coming weekend. While the event is two-days this year, our club will only be selling beer on Saturday, July 2 from 3 p.m. - 10 p.m. Project Chair Jeff Dunning says there will be three varieties of draft beer available, as well as cans of flavored adult beverages. Credit cards will not be accepted, so extra cashiers will be needed. Additionally, Mark Glenn says we've been authorized to sell bottles of Pepsi products in another tent nearby. If you are able to volunteer and have not signed up, reach out to Jeff at (580) 483-6931.

### AMTRYKES

Be sure to attend the next club meeting on June 27 for the latest AmTryke giveaway. Dr. Jimmy plans to present the Tryke to a young man named Zachary.

### SPARK OF THE WEEK

Megan Siaca-Cook was named the Spark of the Week. She joined the club in 2021 and is currently serving on the AmTryke Committee. Megan is a mother to her son and a nurse at Comanche County Memorial Hospital. She says she enjoys being a Great Plains AMBUC because of the organization's mission to help people in need.

### TRIVIA SOCIAL

The June edition of the Trivia Social was held on Thursday at Red Dirt Reloaded. Hannah Muirhead led another entertaining evening, which featured fire department trivia questions from Paul Warmuskeren. Hannah's famous "group of animals" question this month was, "what animals make up a kettle?" Congratulations to Esther Jones for finishing with the most correct (by Hannah's determination) answers.



Social Chair Hannah Muirhead leads the round of trivia for June's evening social event.

50/50

Jenny Clement-Shaw drew the King of Diamonds. The pot stood at \$175.

NEWSLETTER

Zeldon Rice had the winning ticket and his copy of AMBUNK.