



Home of the AmTryke

We meet
Each Thursday at Noon
in the Heritage Room of
1st United Methodist
Church
400 N. Fredonia St.
Longview, Texas 75601

THE BOCCANEER

LONGVIEW AMBUCS

P. O. Box 3092 - Longview, Texas 75606-3092

March 15, 2018

www.longviewambucs.com

EDITOR: Don Esch, 903-291-0888

Presiding:	Dick Allen
Prayer:	Tim Hood
Pledge:	John Durst
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<b>Members:</b>	37
<b>Guests:</b>	3
<b>Tracey Bradshaw</b>	guest of Dave Dean
<b>Anson</b>	grandson of Steve Warner
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Attendance:	\$220
50/50:	\$37
	Luke Ethridge
	Jeff Thorpe

Birthdays & Health News:

Albert Goettle will be 65 on the 17th. Hewitt will celebrate 40 years of marriage on the 17th. Forest is celebrating 2 years of marriage this month. Dave Dean was with us today, and brought his daughter. Glad you are doing better, Dave! Linda Voyles asked if we would donate an AmTryke in Al's memory to the grandson of Al's therapist. The board will consider this along with Paul's suggestion that we buy her a rose bush, also in Al's memory.

Other News:

The fishing tournament and Regional Conference are on June 1st. Applications are steadily coming in for the fishing tournament. Get with Hewitt if you'd like to help prepare/cook the food. We need door prizes. Bring them to Steve. The Big Hatter's social will be April 24th, and our banquet is May 31st. We will soon be offering tickets for the National Ambucs conference.

Amtrykes:

Steve Rogers reported that an 7 Amtrykes were delivered to North Carolina via Billy H. They were shipped to Africa in a special container bound for Kenya, organized by Samaritan's Purse. They will be received in Africa by a school that serves disabled children. Pics of this endeavor below.



Al Bingham gave away a Tryke to an adult near Houston. The picture shows the recipient.

Ramps:

Kevin said we have 2 ramp builds this Saturday, with a total of 9 boxes. Some students have volunteered and we need more Ambucs people.



Todd Hancock

CEO – CHRISTUS Good Shepherd
Mr. Hancock believes that healthcare is a ministry of extending the healing ministry of Christ. He previously was the CEO at CHRISTUS Mother Francis, and was presented with an opportunity to be the President & CEO of CHRISTUS Good Shepherd.

Upon acceptance of the job, he was told to hit the ground running, because GSMC was close to going

out of business. GSMC has become stable and profitable in 6 months. It was expected to take 2 or 3 years to reach profitability.

The total footprint of GSMC is 125,000 ER visits a year, bigger than Tyler ER's, and one of the most active ER's in Texas. CHRISTUS has 10,000 employees in Texas.

They also have facilities in Texarkana, Mother Francis in Tyler, and offices in Sulphur Springs. 3,000 employees are based in Longview. Across the state of Texas, they have 13 hospitals, with CHRISTUS headquarters in Irving. Altogether, they have \$6B in assets. They also serve patients in Mexico and South America.

Ever since the Affordable Care Act (Obama Care), healthcare has become a big challenge, an inversion.

Expenses are outpacing revenues. Healthcare facilities began to fail at record numbers. Just paying costs is not a good business model, because government subsidies and payments are typically inadequate to meet rising expenses.

Self pay is also not reliable. Most self pay accounts are written off, because the patient cannot pay. As a result of The Affordable Care Act, there has been an accelerated closure of independent hospitals, because insurance companies began paying less, and negotiations for better payment structures are not possible, due to low volume.

The larger a hospital is (in terms of patient volume), the more negotiating power they have for better insurance contracts.

Since GSMC is organized as non-profit, CHRISTUS is now investing profits into new technology, and infrastructure. A recent example is the repaving of the parking lot in Marshall. Technology is expensive. Newer MRI machines are very expensive, and updates are being

made now. He said ETMC in Tyler and Longview Regional, by contrast, are organized as for profit.

GSMC plows profits into new technology and people. In 2017, they dispensed \$200M in uncompensated care to communities they serve. Mr. Hancock said there would be a huge hole in the Longview economy if GSMC would have failed. They have hired 20 new doctors and are building a fabulous new heart program. Cardio thoracic care will improve greatly with the construction of a multi-million dollar heart care building in Longview.

In the next 2 years, you will witness an increase in CHRISTUS medical service offerings in Longview.

There are always threats to future success at GSMC. Todd is mindful of the cost footprint here, striving to bring costs down, which will help reduce the cost of healthcare. Per day cost of operations is \$1M. There is 750,000 square feet of conditioned space requiring utilities and maintenance – a significant expense. The old hospital infrastructure in downtown will continue to operate even though the town is moving north. GSMC has experienced business growth of 17 percent, due to increased patient volume since CHRISTUS took over.

Mr. Hancock said there are 3 factors that contribute to profitability.

1. Cost Control
2. Patient Volume
3. Adequate Insurance Payments

He has a plan in place that will perpetually address those 3 things. Medical service lines will grow and therefore more physicians will be recruited. CHRISTUS will continue to negotiate better payment structures with insurance companies. He said that reduced cash pricing will still be offered as a means of lowering costs. He encouraged patients to negotiate with the hospital for a lower bill.

Todd emphasized that healthcare being 20 to 25% of Gross Domestic Product is not sustainable. He further said that trends are pointing to a single payer system, a.k.a. government payments (Medicare/Medicaid), as baby boomers age. Government payments typically are at cost or less than the cost of the service, but he expects government payments to increase due to higher patient volume.

As a result, the trend will be rationalized care, to control costs. For example, currently those in their 80's and 90's can have double knee replacement. It appears that these options may decline, as rationalized care thinking takes hold.

Also, trending is that hospitals with high volume and high efficiency will be paid higher government payments, being performance based. Mr. Hancock said that in the future, the government may demand hospitals lower diabetes by 5% (for example), and their performance and subsequent payments will reflect meeting the goal stipulated. Future healthcare will emphasize prevention, to control costs. Currently, poor families typically don't maintain their health, and then come to the ER when they are desperately ill.

Todd mentioned that CHRISTUS owns 60 acres in north Longview, and plans are being made for a future cancer center, and an orthopedic surgical presence on this land. He also hopes to have a medical training facility to encourage more young people to become doctors.

Mr. Hancock introduced Ms. Jennifer Ware from Public Relations. Last year, she allocated \$600,000 to local charities & community organizations in this regard. He said we should work with Jennifer for future allocations to Ambucs, or other charities of which we are aware.