



We meet  
Each Thursday at Noon  
You are welcome  
to join us.

Home of the AmTryke

# THE BOCCANEER

## LONGVIEW AMBUCS

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

September 13, 2018

[www.longviewambucs.com](http://www.longviewambucs.com)

EDITOR: Don Esch, 903-291-0888

**Presiding:** James White  
**Prayer:** Michael Garza  
**Pledge:** Tommy Knight

**Members: 30**

**Guests: 1**

**Name:** **Guest of:**  
**Corey Robert Lee** **Michael Garza**

**Attendance:** \$936 Jess Ingram  
50/50 \$49 Jeff Thorpe

### Power, Inc. Annual Event

On Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>, Power, Inc. will hold their annual event at Lake Gladewater for the physically challenged. This event is specially designed for physically challenged people to participate in water sports. We need help setting up tents, chairs, and our trailers. The board authorized a \$2,000 donation to Power, Inc.

### Mobility Bash

We had a fantastic Bash Saturday night with a packed house; 89 tables with 8 chairs each. Thanks to all the Ambucs volunteers who sold tickets, set up, cleaned up, brought food, brought auction items, manned the check-in, operated the booths etc. Our own Jack Crawford won the grand prize of \$10,000. Congrats!

### Other News

The Longview sesquicentennial parade will be in 2020, and Ambucs will be the primary sponsor and have name recognition. It will be April 18th, and if rained out, it will be postponed to the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Duke Owen is having surgery tomorrow. Prayers appreciated.



### Wayne Mansfield

Wayne talked about the new Dollar General warehouse. It is a large project, and construction is 4 mos. ahead of schedule. He said products will begin arriving in December and will be shipped in January. The warehouse will create 400 jobs, and 100 spin-off jobs. The project was a \$70M capital investment, but actual figures are closer to \$90M. The State of Mississippi spent twice what we did to attract Dollar General, but Longview was chosen primarily because 2,100 job applicants showed up at their job fair. The availability of labor and an attractive tax package won the deal for us. It took everybody coming together to make this happen in both the City and County

### National Conference

It will be Oct. 3rd-6th at the Peppermint Hotel Resort in Reno NV. Number is 866-821-9996. Aug 30th is the last day for early bird registration. There are flights out of Longview and Tyler airports to Reno. Billy H. said there is an app you can download called Identity which has a map of the resort and info about the Ambucs itinerary. We will give away an AmTryke there.

### Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30.

### Birthdays & Anniversaries

On the 15<sup>th</sup>, Charlie McGregor celebrates his 21-year anniversary. A 30-year anniversary will be celebrated by Jeff Thorpe on the 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Don Nimmo turns 77 on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Government sectors. As far as Texas counties go, we have an unusually high level of cooperation between City and County leadership, who embrace working together instead of competing with one another. A piece of legislation call Chapter 381 gave the County authority to change the way they work with the City. The City of Longview, Longview ISD, and the County invested \$200,000 a year to attract the wholesale giant to Longview. Our return is \$1.5M.

The warehouse is 1 million sq. feet and construction involved digging down 10 feet for foundation footings. 300 total trucks a day (inbound and outbound) will service the facility from the George Richey Road. Dollar General will hire 100 employees in their first year, with full employment projected in 2022. However, Wayne feels that it will probably happen sooner. We are also in the running with 1 other city for a German owned manufacturing center. We are looking good to the company executives, and are a strong candidate.

Dollar General has a similar warehouse in San Antonio, and one being built in Hempstead, New York. Construction on the Longview warehouse started after New York, but ours is ahead of schedule, with the New York facility still under construction.



### **County Judge Bill Stoudt**

Bill Stoudt said our County is very strong, and our presence at the Austin state capital is strong thanks to former mayor (and now State Representative) Jay Dean. He praised Jay Dean for being appointed to the appropriations committee as a freshman, which is unheard of in Austin.

Gregg county has the lowest tax rate of counties in the entire state of Texas. We have no debt, and pay cash for capital projects. Mr. Stoudt believes that a County Judge must think about the future of county residents and budget strategically, instead of reactively. For example, without the George Richey extension, Dollar General would never have come, because they needed adequate road infrastructure for the steady stream of trucks in and out of the warehouse.

Judge Stoudt said we have a \$32M surplus. The Highway 42 widening project begins in 2024, and the county's share of funding will be \$10M. The Highway 80 widening project is almost ready to open. He said that Highway 31 is in the engineering phase for widening it. Mr. Stoudt said there have just been too many deaths on 31, and widening it should help make things safer.

Bill said we must plan our strategic budgeting in a way that preserves a fair tax rate, currently .625%.

Because of good planning, our tax rate is good for years or come. He said that going forward, we must budget to pay cash for projects.

During good years we keep the money in surplus, which means we don't have to raise taxes during the lean years. Judge Stoudt believes in watching expenses, and budgeting monies in a careful and deliberate way.

We are currently in growth mode in Gregg county. He mentioned other projects of which he has been involved, such as the Harrison Road improvements, and developing the front part of airport with new hangers. Concerning downtown parking, the county bought the lot across from courthouse.

Bill said that there will be some personnel changes in the courthouse this January, with 5 new qualified officials coming on board. He said this will surely change the personnel dynamics, but that new people are younger and will have new ideas. He believes although change may be difficult, it is a good thing.

Voting machines will not change for mid-term elections, but there is an ongoing investigation with the State Attorney's Office concerning voter fraud in our county. He said that some voters vote absentee due to supposed handicapped status, but social media shows pictures of them playing in ball games! Go figure.

Judge Stoudt said that projects must be thought of years in advance, and they take careful financing, political will, and status with the State of Texas for matching funds. He again said that Jay Dean has had a big influence in Austin.