



# The Ratchet



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Meets Mondays - 6:00 P.M. - Alton Sports Tap Restaurant

[www.altongodfreyrotary.org](http://www.altongodfreyrotary.org)

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue #139 April/May 2009

## Students of the Month-April/May

Raphael Fiuro and Emily Zahner of Alton High School were honored by the Alton/Godfrey Rotary Club as Students of the Month for April at the Club's regular meeting at the Alton Sports Tap Restaurant on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Raphael Figueroa is the son of Dr. Sam and Miroslava Figueroa of Alton. He is a member of the National Honor Society and has received a host of academic honors at Alton High. He was nominated to the National Society of High School Scholars, attended the National Youth Leadership Forum, and the Presidential Youth Inaugural. Figueroa has been nominated for Boy's State and has earned certificates of Achievement at the National Youth Leadership Forum on medicine.



Raphael has been active in many school organizations including the Spanish and Biology clubs, Rotary Interact, and Student Pride. A member of the Math League and WYSE, he serves on the Student Council and was selected as a Principal's Ambassador. He also serves on the staff of the Redbird Nest and is a member of the Redbird golf team. He was recognized with a certificate of achievement for scholarship and athleticism in golf.

In his spare time Raphael participates in a variety of activities including volunteer work at St. Anthony's Hospital, and working on projects to support the efforts of the Salvation Army

After graduating from Alton High, Raphael plans to major in biology or pre-medicine at Washington University or the University of Chicago.

Emily Zahner is the daughter of Alan and Mary Zahner of Alton. She is a member of the National Honor Society, was selected to the National Honor Roll, and is a recipient of a Silver Medallion Award for Academic Excellence.

Emily has been active in school activities serving on the staff of the Redbird Nest and as a member in the French Club. She has been a member of the Redbird girls volleyball team for four years and was recognized with the 110 Percent award, and the award for athleticism and



continued on page 4

## Rotary Programs



### Jun 1 Alton Sports Tap

Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. Club Assembly.

### Jun 8 Temple Banquet Center

Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. Student of the Year will be recognized. High Schools will receive recognition plaques listing the names of the students who were recognized as Students of the Month during the 2008-2009 school year.

### Jun 15 Rolling Hills Golf Course

Steak Fry at the Rolling Hills Golf Course Club House 6:00 p.m. A golf outing will precede the meeting. Contact Richard Johnson for details.

### Jun 22 Rolling Hills Golf Course

Annual Golf Outing  
 Time: 12:30 PM Tee Off  
 Game: 4-Man Scramble  
 Cost: \$75.00 per player/\$300 per team  
 Dinner: Steak Fry starting at 5:30 PM  
 Auction Live Auction starting at 6:15 PM followed by Golf Awards and 50/50 Drawing.

## Student Essays

*In this month's issue of The Ratchet, we are again focusing on original compositions by our students of the month.*

### **Love For Volleyball**

*by Emily Zahner*

Volleyball, to me, is the greatest sport of all time. There is so much action and intensity on the volleyball court that one can not help but be mesmerized. I love to not only watch, but play this incredible sport.

My first experience with volleyball came when I was in fourth grade. I was hesitant. I did not believe I had the skills to play. My friends, however, believed in me and convinced me to play. From that first practice, my love for volleyball started growing.

When it came time for me to start high school, I knew I wanted to play. I just had to get through try-outs. My first try-out, like any other first, was nerve-racking. I walked into that gym my freshman year not knowing a single person. I was among 40 other girls competing for a spot on Alton High's Freshman Volleyball Team. I was from a small private school with only basic volleyball skills. Most of the other girls had been playing together for a few years and had better skills than I did. My hope was quickly fading; but I wanted to make the team and play my favorite sport in high school. I gave my very best that week. The two things going for me was my height (I'm 5'11") and my determination. The last day the coach put the list of who made the team out in the hall way. I walked up to that list sweaty, tired and nervous. The coach kept 15 girls and miraculously my name was on that list. There it was on one piece of paper, one decision that would help make my high school experience great.

From that day on, my love for volleyball grew even more. From the sweat-filled practices to the long, laughter driven bus rides, I have made lasting memories on the Alton High Volleyball Team.

We have had many successful seasons during my 4 years on the Alton High Volleyball Team. My teammates and I grew to become great friends and that of course helped us out on the court. We learned to work together as a team and how to help pick each other up. Our determination, hard work, and team work showed on and off the court. We were lucky to have numerous wins and also were able to set and break a

### **Change In Outlook**

*by Raphael Figueroa*

There are just a handful of instances in which I have changed my outlook on things, and one person helped me tremendously to do that. I have a great deal of admiration and respect towards this person because I have never encountered a friend with so much optimism and wisdom. I didn't plan on learning so much in such a short time, and it all happened in by chance with the assistance of a complete stranger.

A few summers ago, my mother invited me to go with her to Poland to visit my grandparents and some of our relatives. I was a little apprehensive to travel outside the country, but the idea of seeing the world in a new light and actually visiting the place where my mother was born overwhelmed me with excitement. We arrived at my grandparent's house after hours of flying and driving in Lubsko, Poland. Before I met or spoke with my relatives, I always thought of myself as a fluent Polish speaker, but I was proven wrong pretty quickly. When I met some of my aunts and cousins, I could hardly understand what they were saying because they were talking so fast, and I was speaking so slowly that it was impossible for me to understand anyone or anything. I did have one friend named Damien who took the extra time to listen to me and teach me a few new phrases. Damien showed me around town so I happily returned the favor by asking him to come with us on a trip to the beach.

It is rare in life to meet people that are genuinely good hearted, honest people who are willing to sacrifice anything for the sake of others, and Damien really exemplified that type of person. Damien kindly declined my invitation to the beach because he wanted his grandmother to go instead because she had never been on vacation or outside town. I could see that he truly cared for his family and put them before himself. It humbled me to see him do that for his grandmother because I have had opportunities which I have taken for granted. At that moment, he opened my eyes and my conscience to the real world, and from that point on, I have focused on making a difference in the lives of

*New Orleans*

few school records. My sophomore year, our team worked very hard to end the season with a record of 21 wins and 1 loss. My senior year, we broke the school record for the most wins. The old record of 21 wins and 8 losses was set in 1998. The new record set in 2008 is 24 wins and 8 losses. We also celebrated our coach's 200<sup>th</sup> win in 2008.

My teammates and I worked hard, became great friends and had a blast playing volleyball. One thing we all realized, however, was that we couldn't have done any of it without the great coaches we had each year. Each coach taught me something new and helped me not only become a better volleyball player but also a better teammate. Volleyball is a team sport and team work is essential when playing volleyball if you want to be successful. My teammates and my coaches helped me to grow as both a volleyball player and as an individual. I learned to believe in myself and that with hard work and determination anything is possible.

I hope to continue my love for volleyball at Maryville University where I plan to major in Occupational Therapy. I am hoping to help others regain their independence by working with them in therapy and encouraging them to keep working so they can improve their daily living skills.



*Change*

others. I really did not want to deny Damien the chance to go on vacation after what he did so I asked my mom, and she gladly said that we could take him and his grandmother. Although I spent just a few weeks with Damien, he taught me so much about life and myself that I am indebted to him forever.

Everyone including myself likes to build up walls to block out change or difference and create comfort zones, and it takes courage to try something new or different. Damien had that courage and welcomed me with open arms even though I did not look or talk like a Pole. It is essential to withhold judgment with whomever one may meet or whatever one may do. Our differences bring us all closer together because no one can ever reach their full potential without the help and encouragement of others. Before I met Damien, I never appreciated all that I have like hot water or the chance to take a vacation. Sometimes, people get so caught up in their busy lives and schedules that they do not take the time to sit down and be thankful. For me, it took a friend from a different country to change my perspective of the world, and now I am constantly reminded to appreciate my opportunities and share them with others. I can now admit that without Damien I would have continued to only focus on myself, but he has taught me that if one does a little more for others and a little less for oneself then it can really pay off in the end. Overall, I have a newfound respect for Damien because he was more a brother to me than a friend.

**Jun 21-24 Birmingham, England**

Rotary International Convention

**Jun 27 Lockhaven Country Club**

Annual Meeting 6:00 p.m. Induction of New Officers, Board of Directors, and Paul Harris Fellows. Scott Neudecker will be passing the gavel to new president, Ford Phillips. Larry Thompson will be inducted as District 6460 Governor.

**Jul 6 Alton Sports Tap**

Regular meeting 6:00 p.m. Program to be announced.

**Jul 13 Alton Sports Tap**

Regular meeting 6:00 p.m. Program to be announced.

**Jul 20 Rolling Hills Golf Course**

Steak Fry at the Rolling Hills Golf Course Club House 6:00 p.m. A golf outing will precede the meeting. Contact Richard Johnson for details.

**Jul 27 Alton Sports Tap**

Regular meeting 6:00 p.m. Program to be announced.

-Bill Hoagland, Program Director



*Students of Month*

scholarship in that sport for the past two years.

Emily keeps very busy by contributing her time to community activities . She has worked on the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life, the Salvation Army’s Christmas Bell ringing, and the Rock Springs Park Winter Wonderland. She has served as a camp volunteer at the Alton high volleyball camp for the past four years.

Zahner plans to major in occupational therapy at Maryville University or Illinois College after graduating



Ryan Huber and De Carlo Logan of Alton High School were honored by the Alton/ Godfrey Rotary Club as Students of the Month for May at the Club’s regular meeting at the Alton Sports Tap Restaurant on May 11th.

Ryan Huber is the son of Patrick and Janet Huber of Godfrey. He is an Illinois State Scholar and a Silver Medallion Award winner. He has the

distinction of being nominated to the United States Air Force Academy by Congressman John Shimkus and was the recipient of the JROTC Daedalian Award and Academic ribbon. He served as the JROTC Command Chief during the past year. Huber was also the recipient of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Prairie State Achievement Awards.

Ryan is a member of the National Honor Society and has been active in the school’s music programs as a member of the Celebrations and Concert Choirs and the annual spring musicals sponsored by the school. He has been active in the

Math League , served as Treasurer of the Social Justice Club and been a member of the Redbird baseball team.

In his spare time Ryan contributes of himself to his community and school by volunteering for and participating in a number of community projects. He has been particularly active in projects undertaken by the school’s JROTC. He has been active in Boys Scout his church youth group programs as well.

After graduating from Alton High Ryan plans to attend the United States Air Force Academy majoring in Aerospace Engineering



De Carlo Logan is the son of Stephanie Logan of Alton. De Carlo is also an Illinois State Scholar and a Silver Medallion Recipient. He is a member of the National Honor Society and received the DAR Good citizenship and Excellence in Education awards. He has been very active in school activities holding

membership in the Spanish and Movie clubs, the Math League, WYSE, and Mu Alpha Theta Math Society.

Logan is a participant in the Upward bound program and serves as a student assistant to Alton High staff. He also serves as Vice President of the Social Justice club and President of the Peer Leadership group. In his spare time Logan serves as a peer tutor/mentor and as a Camp Success counselor.

Logan plans to major in studio art and business at Illinois College after graduating from Alton High..

**Club Officers 2008-2009**

President.....	Scott Neudecker 5212 Richland Woods Dr., Alton, 462-4697
Vice-President.....	Ford Phillips 1007 Henry St., Alton, 463-0769
Secretary .....	Roland Hansen 820 Creekwood Lane, Godfrey, 466-1970
Treasurer .....	Mike Tillman 1902 Paris Dr., Godfrey, 466-1928
Executive Secretary.....	Melissa Seymour 3026 Edwards St., Alton, 462-7206

**Board of Directors 2008-2009**

Rod Elias-3rd yr	Ebony Huddleston-2nd yr
Dick Jones-3rd yr	Brian White-2nd yr
Sam Stemm-3rd yr	Dave Walker-1st yr
Ken Spells-3rd yr	Larry Spain-1st yr
Gail Weinrich-3rd yr	Brock Hendricks-1st yr
Jasper Fisher-2nd yr	Michael Osborne-1st yr
Donald Moyer-2nd yr	Tom Turpin-1st yr
Jeff Weber-2nd yr	Josh Farley-PP