



The Ratchet



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A Monthly Newsletter

Issue #132 September 2008

Mural Project Moving Forward

Rotary Programs



At the regular monthly meeting of the Alton/Godfrey Rotary Club on Monday, September 27, 2008, the committee made a recommendation to place a mural on the wall of Royal Office Products. The project received overwhelming support from everyone in attendance. On Monday, October 13, 2008, the project will be presented to the board for their consideration. If approved, work will begin on surface preparation this fall.

Oct 6 Tony's Restaurant

Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m.
 Congressman John Shimkus will provide an update on legislation before Congress.

Oct 13 Johnson's Corner

Board of Directors meeting, 5:00 p.m.
 Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. Students of the Month for October will be honored.

Oct 20 Rolling Hills

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.

Oct 27 To Be Announced

Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. Our speaker for October 27 will be Joe Ritter, the Assistant Academic Dean at Principia College and Chair of the Chemistry Department. He will discuss the Solar Car Project, in which students and faculty members at Principia designed and constructed a solar-powered automobile that got significant national acclaim earlier this

Students of the Month

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

My Trip To Vienna

by Andrea McPike



This summer I had the honor of representing the United States in a swimming competition held in Vienna, Austria. I was selected to participate in the World's Sport Festival through a program called People to People. The mission of People to People is to provide an adventurous international experience while

supporting President Dwight D. Eisenhower's vision that each person can make a difference and help to achieve peace through understanding. The competition brought together people from all over the world who held a common interest in athletics and who wanted to become more involved with life outside of his or her own country. Although it was a great honor to be able to represent the United States in swimming, the experience itself and the people that I met are more valuable to me than the medals that I won during the competition.

My trip to Vienna lasted for ten days, and, of course, two of those days were used completely for travel. The first four days in Vienna consisted of a swim practice and a different tourist activity each day. The coach for the U.S. swim team was a two-time Olympic swimmer, Lenny Krayzelburg. I could not believe it when I first saw him. A former Olympic swimmer was watching my stroke technique and giving me tips on how to improve. It was seriously a once in a life time experience. How many people can say that they have been coached by an Olympian? Not only that, he was so down-to-earth and worked extremely well with kids of all ages. After the four days of practice, we were ready to compete.

The swimming competition took place in three days. It was held in the swimming complex in Vienna, and we competed in a 50 meter pool. By 8:00 a.m. on the first day of competition, all of the athletes representing the seven or eight

different countries gathered around the pool deck for the first race of the competition. It was so incredible being around kids my age who spoke many different languages. Swimming, however, was something that we all had in common. Before my races, I would always shake the hands of the girls standing to my right and to my left and wish them good luck. One time when I held out my hand to the girl next to me, she looked at me with the most curious expression. She had not a clue what I was doing. I grabbed her hand and said "Good luck!" with a smile. Although the language barrier prevented her from understanding what I said, I know that there was a connection between the two of us. We understood each other with just a simple smile and a hand gesture. That, I believe, summarized the purpose of my trip: to meet people with many differences who share a common interest. We did not let the language barrier prevent us from connecting and sharing moments with each other. Most of the other athletes there did speak English as a second language, which made me feel so ignorant for only being able to communicate in English, so verbal communication was normally not a problem. I met three girls from Germany who were two years younger than me but could carry a conversation with me almost perfectly. I still to this day e-mail a boy from Hungary that I met during the competition. He was so kind when I met him. He brought a towel from his hometown and gave it to me as a gift to remember him and our friendship forever. This is why I say that the experience itself was more important to me than the actual competition. I was pretty successful as an athlete during my stay in Vienna, but I think the greater success was making such rare friendships that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Traveling to Vienna for this world wide competition made me realize how important it is to be educated in the cultures of other countries. I want to continue traveling whenever the opportunity arises. I love meeting people from other countries and talking to them about their lives. I hope that someday all people come to understand the importance of international relations. Not only would it be extremely beneficial for our economy, but it would also create a more pleasant world. We are a long way from peace throughout all nations, but I believe that all people are good at heart, sometimes it just takes a little bit of time and effort to bring the best out of people. Perhaps someday, maybe through programs like People to People, we can embrace the dream of President Eisenhower and look at people of all different races, genders, and religions with understanding, appreciation, and admiration. It is with our differences that we can create strength. It is with unity that we can create power. It is with peace that we can create happiness. It is up to this generation to promote change, and I am up to the challenge.

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Boys' State

by Trevor Paul



Toward the conclusion of my junior year, I was asked to attend Boys' State at Eastern Illinois University. Never previously hearing about the Boys' State program, I was slightly hesitant to dedicate a week out of my ever-important adolescent summer break. All of my vacillation evaporated when the word "scholarship" was uttered. With college tuitions on the rise, most students jump at the opportunity to earn scholarships.

On June 12th, I and five other boys from Alton High hopped on a van and drove to Charleston, Illinois, unsure of what was to come. As soon as I stepped on the Eastern campus, I was overcome by the Boys' State atmosphere. There were

approximately seven hundred guys on the main quad discussing politics! I finally felt as though my love of politics at age seventeen was not an abnormal medical apodosis.

Although Boys' State was a very welcoming environment, it was also a very competitive one. As soon as the elections were conceived, grass root campaigning took over campus. It was incredible to be involved in public campaigning as well as under the table politics. While at Boys' State, I ran for and won the positions of: city treasurer, city councilman, county treasurer, and election judge.

Another titillating aspect of Boys' State was participating in sports. At Boys' State, the seven hundred boys are separated into six counties with three cities in each county. I was a citizen of Gaza City in Gleason County. Each county has sports teams. I played for the Gleason County volleyball team. Although we did not win the volleyball tournament, I was nominated for the sportsmanship award. Following my nomination, I was interviewed by a panel of three legionaries. They asked me myriad questions ranging from my opinion on flag burning, to my position on federalism, to which pro-athlete inspired me most. Shortly after my interview, I was notified that I won the Sportsmanship Award and was in fact late for the Boys' Nation interview! Opprobrious but excited, I sprinted to the hall across the quad to be interviewed by a prominent Chicago lawyer, a senator, and the head legionnaire. The winners of the Commander and Model Citizen's awards had already gone which meant I was the last interviewee. In the interview, I was asked to explain my stances on economic, social, and foreign policy issues. The final question was, "If you represent Illinois in Washington, what legislation would you try to get passed?" In response, I explained a bill I would put together that would

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year. He will be accompanied by other participants in the project.

Nov 3 To Be Announced

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

Nov 10 To Be Announced

Board of Directors meeting, 5:00 p.m. Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. Students of the Month for November will be honored.

Nov 17 Rolling Hills

Steak Fry at the Rolling Hills Golf Course Club House 6:00 p.m. Second Quarter Club Assembly for the election of new officers and board of director members for 2009-2010. Committees report to the membership.

Nov 24 To Be Announced

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

Bill Hoagland - Program Director



preserve the Constitution by basically implementing the 1913 Law of Massachusetts at the federal level. The law would protect states' rights through the principle of federalism regarding gay marriage. Although the judges were far-left liberals, they seemingly liked my interview and sent me and a Kevin Dore of Benet Academy in Chicago, to be the Illinois senators at Boys' Nation. Boys' State was truly a life-changing experience; I unequivocally learned about the state legislature, and made life-long friends. Au contraire to my belief at the end of Boys' State, my experience at Boys' Nation was even more incredible.

On July 24th, my flight left for Washington. My Boys' Nation Experience began on the plane. I unexpectedly sat next to the two Boys' Nation senators from Missouri. We spent the two hour flight discussing A.N.W.R. and alternative energy resources. From that moment, I knew that Boys Nation would be an experience about which I would tell my grandchildren. Boys' Nation was held at Marymount University in Washington, D.C., and as soon as I arrived to the campus, our senate was called to order. The caliber of students at Boys' Nation was incredible, and I would certainly not be surprised if I was in the midst of a future president of the United States. While at Boys' Nation, we compressed an entire presidential election, including party conventions, and an entire senate session into one week. That obviously made for a busy week, but I enjoyed every second of it. I debated the bill I authored through the senate subcommittees and onto the senate floor where it was passed. I also helped my Nationalist Party presidential candidate get elected. After he was elected, I was selected to be his attorney general. Aside from participating first-hand in the federal diplomatic process, I was given the opportunity to converse with real law-makers. I was able to meet George W. Bush, Barbara Boxer, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, Ron Paul, Dick Durban, Jerry Castello, and even Richard Simmons who was on the Hill pushing a physical education bill. Participating in mock government, making great friends, and meeting celebrity politicians certainly shaped my life, and has given me the desire to go into politics post-retirement.

As I said in my Student of the Month Speech, the most influential part of my Boys' State and Boys' Nation experience was taught to me not in a tangible sense, but rather through the actions of the legionnaires. Seeing their admiration for the United States and their reactions to things such as the Pledge of Allegiance, the National Anthem, and National Memorials was touching. It made me realize the grandeur of the freedoms that we have as Americans, and my appreciation for the veterans who have fought for the preservation of those freedoms is infinite.

Bethany Returns



Bethany Boyer-Rechlin, the student who went to Finland through the Rotary Youth Exchange Program in 2005, returned on September 29th to give us a report on her experience. It was evident that her trip provided her with life-changing and character-forming knowledge. She is currently a senior at Principia College. Bethany's presentation evidenced maturity and understanding beyond her years. Alton/Godfrey Rotary is better for having known her.

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	Chris Fox-1st yr
Gail Weinrich-3rd yr	Brock Hendricks-1st yr
Jasper Fisher-2nd yr	Michael Osborne-1st yr
Martha Morse-2nd yr	Tom Turpin-1st yr
Alan McBride-2nd yr	Josh Farley-PP