



# The Ratchet



Received Charter No 851 from Rotary International March 1, 1921

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

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

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue #143 September 2009

## Overwhelming Odds

John O'Leary will be the keynote speaker at the District 6460 Conference to be held in Godfrey, Illinois, on November 13-14.



John's O'Leary's life is proof of the power of the human spirit. As a nine-year-old boy, he was burned on 100% of his body and given less than one percent chance of surviving the first night. He endured months in the hospital, years in therapy, dozens of surgeries, and lost all of his fingers to amputation.

In 2006 he was inducted into the Energizer "Keep Going" Hall of Fame. He shares this Hall of Fame award with baseball great, Cal Ripken, Jr. In 2007, John was selected the St. Louis University young alumni of the year, and in 2009 he was chosen as one

of the Top Ten "Most Interesting People" in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Last year, John shared his message with over 140 organizations in 32 states and 4 countries. He is a heavily sought-after speaker in the arenas of healthcare, education, safety, sales, and marketing. From local schools to high executive management teams, John challenges his audience to dream big, plan smart and take action.

To learn more about John and his dynamic online community, visit [www.Rising-Above.com](http://www.Rising-Above.com) and get ready to re-ignite your life!

## Rotary Programs



**Oct 5**

**Alton Sports Tap**

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Our speaker will be Sister Chabanel, who is a nun and a member of the Ursuline Order. She is a member of the Ursuline Community in Alton. She will discuss the services that the Ursuline sisters are providing to the Alton area today.

**Oct 12**

**Alton Sports Tap**

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

**Oct 19**

**Rolling Hills**

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

**Oct 26**

**Alton Sports Tap**

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Melissa Erker, the Public Relations Director at the ConocoPhillips refinery in Wood River, will present the program. She will discuss the recently announced plans to expand the Wood River facility.

## Student Essays

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

### *On Stage*

*by Adriana Jones*



The hot, glaring lights, the anxious crowds, the awkward feeling in your stomach before the curtain opens; these are all things that I encounter very frequently when I perform on stage, and I love them all. Because I discovered that music theater was my passion later than most others do, I am all the more determined to

succeed in the field. I would make any and all sacrifices to achieve my ultimate goal, which is to perform on a Broadway stage in New York City, and I believe that as long as I keep my eyes on the prize, I will definitely achieve my goal.

I was a freshman at Alton High School when I tried out for my first musical, and I had already decided before hand that if I did not get a lead, then I would play soccer. Well, I ended up only getting a spot in the chorus, so I played soccer for the Alton High girls' soccer team that year, and I enjoyed it but I still wasn't satisfied. As a result, I tried out for the school musical again my sophomore year, and I received the role of Lorraine in the rock and roll musical "All Shook Up." I knew that I wouldn't be able to both play soccer and participate in the musical so I had to choose, but what I didn't know was that my decision would ultimately change the rest of my life.

As soon as I felt what it was like to be onstage singing, acting, and dancing at the same time, I was hooked and I have been ever since. But being onstage is not the only fun part about musical theater, because you usually are not alone. With every different show I do, I get to know different groups of people, and even though we are only together for a few hours a day, we end up becoming a family. It's awesome to see, over the course

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### *A Senate Page*

*by Megan Simmons*



My hands shook as I opened the letter. My parents were hovering over me. I unfolded the paper and read it. Before my parents could even read it, I screamed and leaped into the air. I had been accepted to United States Senate Page School. Excitement overcame me, and in one moment, my whole world seemed to turn upside down.

At first I was in shock. I realized that in a few months I would be packing my life into three suitcases and leaving for Washington D.C. to live for five months. Twenty-nine other kids from around the country, none of whom I knew, and myself, would be serving as Senate Pages second semester of our junior year. I had applied knowing what I was doing, but when I got the letter of acceptance I really questioned my original motives.

Page School meant classes at six in the morning, little sleep, and work until six in the evening, or later. It meant I could no longer keep my cell phone and I had to wear an ugly navy suit every day. The only way to keep in touch with my family and friends was a landline phone and a calling card, which had to be shared between four roommates and myself. I expected the school courses to be rigorous and I expected to run on an average of four or five hours of sleep. My game plan: coffee.

Leaving home was hard, but I knew the new lifestyle ahead of me would be totally worth it. Like I had expected, my classes were hard; it was hard to focus so early in the morning. The days of page school seemed unending, but the work was amazing. Not only did we get to learn how congress works, but also we got to work first hand with Senators, everyday. Pages were on shift every other hour. We would run errands and make copies for our parties' cloakrooms and we would bring senators lecterns and water. During votes we would open doors and tally

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# New Rotarians

Recently, the Alton/Godfrey Rotary Club added two new members.

Above - Carl Dempsey and sponsor Sam Stemm

Below - Brad Cunningham and sponsor Allen Klope



## Rotary Group Plant at Lincoln/Douglas Square



Bill Moyer twists some arms - Photo by Pete Zimmer

**Nov 2 Alton Sports Tap**

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Program to be announced.

**Nov 9 Alton Sports Tap**

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

**Nov 13-14 Lewis & Clark Community College Commons**

District 6460 Conference presented by the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club.

**Nov 16 Rolling Hills**

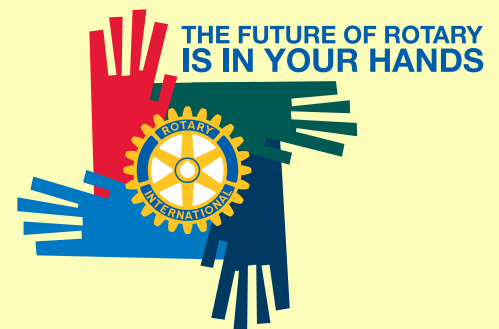
Steak Fry at the Rolling Hills Golf Course Club House 6:00 PM. A golf outing will precede the meeting. Contact Richard Johnson for details.

**Nov 23 Alton Sports Tap**

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Second Quarter Club Assembly for the election of new officers and board of director members for 2010-2010. Committees report to the membership.

**November 30, 2009 Meeting Center at The Alton Sports Tap**

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Program to be announced.



Senate Page

the senators that had voted and chase down the senators who hadn't. We always hoped for a split vote so the Vice President would have to come and preside over the Senate; we loved when he came to visit.

One day, during a vote, I was standing next to the door closest to the cloakroom, in hopes I would be seen on C-Span. Through the glass, I had noticed a senator coming and opened the door, but what I hadn't noticed was that I had opened the door for Senator Ted Kennedy. Because he rarely made it to the Senate, senators from all around the floor, Republican and Democrat, rushed to talk to him. Everyone was huddled around him and it was an amazing feeling. I had felt special just because I had opened a door. The Senate had so many great opportunities and I had the best experience



working with congress.

The Senate had perks every day. Paging was one of the greatest events of my high school career and I

**Club Officers 2009-2010**

President.....Ford Phillips  
 1007 Henry St., Alton, 463-0769  
 Vice President .....Roland Hansen  
 820 Creekwood Lane, Godfrey, 466-1970  
 Secretary ..... Mike Tillman  
 1902 Paris Dr., Godfrey, 466-1928  
 Treasurer .....Jasper Fisher  
 3885 Fosterburg Rd., Alton, 259-3177  
 Executive Secretary .....Melissa Seymour  
 3026 Edwards St., Alton, 462-7206

On Stage



of preparing a show, how close the cast becomes, and the reason we become so close is because we are all there for the same reason; to have fun singing, dancing and making a great show for our audience to see and enjoy. It's one of the many things that I love about musical theater.

I can honestly say that there is no better feeling in the world than the feeling I get when I put on a great show with an awesome cast. It's a feeling that I can only get when I'm onstage, which is why I've committed my time and effort to the art of musical theater. I love musical theater and everything about it, and I will continue to love it for the rest of my life.

On Stage

would definitely do it again. I learned so much in my five months of serving as a United States Senate Page. I am so thankful I had this opportunity and I wouldn't trade my experience for the world.

**Board of Directors 2009-2010**

Dick Jones-1st yr	Dave Walker-2nd yr
Ron Mayhew-1st yr	Jess Woodman-2nd yr
Ken Spells-1st yr	Bob Hamilton-3rd yr
Sam Stemm-1st yr	Ebony Huddleston-3rd yr
Gail Weinrich-1st yr	Don Moyer-3rd yr
Brock Hendricks-2nd yr	Jeni Thompson-3rd yr
Mike Osborne-2nd yr	Jeff Weber-3rd yr
Larry Spain-2nd yr	Scott Neudecker-PP