



The Ratchet



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Another Successful St. Baldrick's Sponsored By Interact

By Brendan Farrell, Interact Secretary

Cancer has been one of the leading causes of death in America for years. Cancer is not just an adult disease, in fact, 1 of every 5,000 children under the age of 15 is diagnosed with cancer every year. The St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven charity committed to funding the most promising research to find cures for childhood cancers and give survivors long and healthy lives. St. Baldrick's Day at Alton High hopes to do exactly that. With each donation, we are one step closer to finding a cure for cancer. On November 2, 2011, 26 people signed up to get their heads shaved in honor of the brave children who have battled cancer. Seven of these people were girls and six teachers also participated. Over 40 volunteers helped out throughout the event as well. Taylor Fritz and Katelyn Clayton both raised tremendous amounts of money, Taylor raising 2,300 dollars and Katelyn raising 1,400.



Taylor with Mom and Dad



Taylor and Katelyn

Along with some of the other girls who got their heads shaved, they will be traveling to St. Jude's Children's Hospital this upcoming weekend to show some of the children there that they support them. By the end of the event, over 8,900 dollars were raised to find a cure for kid's cancer. This was a 46 percent increase from last year's total of 6,100 dollars. As we look forward to next year, we hope to top this year's amount of money raised and to increase the amount of shaves. The AHS Interact Club would like to thank all of the support we received during the event and we can't wait for next year!

Rotary Programs



Nov 7 Alton Sports Tap

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Susie Sweetman, a well-known personal trainer in the Alton area, will present a program on getting physically fit and how having a personal trainer can make the difference in your plans to "get in shape". If you have trouble getting motivated to work out, you need to meet Susie.

Nov 14 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 21 Rolling Hills

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

Nov 28 Alton Sports Tap

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM. Second Quarter Club Assembly for the election of new officers and board of director members for 2012-2012. Committees report to the membership.



Student Essays

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

A Life Left Behind by Shianne Courtney



She stares into her closet that is empty of life. No piles of dirty clothes needing to be picked up or clean ones to be hung. As she closes the door, she remembers what it was like to first open that same door. She tapes up and labels the last box in her room. Her walls are also dead. Everything seemed so lifeless and blank as she grabs her duffel bag and begins to leave. At the doorway she stops. She turns around and a single salty tear wells up in her eye as she remembers. All the friends and family. The memories, both good and bad. She's leaving it all behind. It's hard to do, but she grabs the doorknob, wipes the tears away, and shuts the door. As she walks down the tiny hallway, she remembers playing tag with her dog. Her running down the hallway and the dog following twice as fast.

She glimpses into her brother's room and smiled. After all these years his room still isn't clean. She's going to miss this mess. She passes the doors to the bathroom and basement and steps into the kitchen. She walks in and looks around. The cabinets seem to stare back at her. So many times she had reached into them to grab a snack. It made her wonder if she would ever open them and search through their insides again. The sink drew her eyes to it. It was sparkling and shiny from the light of the window reflecting into it. For once there were not any dishes. She thought to herself, "Was everyone too nervous to eat?"

She wandered into the dining room. Her sister's rabbit was gnawing at his cardboard toy. He was so adorable. He'd sit on her lap and lick her arm and nibble on her shirt. She opened his cage and pet him. His favorite spot was right where his ears met his tiny head. The rabbit closed his round eyes. She whispered, "Goodbye Midnight. I love you little guy." She laid a treat in his cage and locked it back up. She retraced her steps back into the

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Questions by Jonathan Bundy



It was dark as we drove home from my Grandma's house in Springfield, Illinois. I had grown tired of the Gameboy in front of me, as I turned my head toward the starlit sky. As I watched the twinkle of each star, I wondered what a star was exactly. Was it simply a small speck in the sky or was it some wonderful thing that one could only imagine in his dreams. I asked my mother what a star is and her answer was that it is a distant sun.

Questions such as this were very common in my childhood. I always had a curious mind that wanted to know why and how something worked. However, there were two areas that interested me the most, cosmology and medicine. Everyday at school I would look forward to my science class. This was the venue where I could ask my questions and receive my long-awaited answer. Upon my arrival home from the lengthy school day, I further delved into this fascinating world of science that I had come to love. I would rearrange my schedule every night to include watching the Discovery and History channels whenever they had a show pertaining to medicine or astronomy. Shows such as *The Universe* captivated my imagination with explanations of Einstein's theories and the possibilities of black holes and quasars.

Once in high school my thirst for answers could finally be quenched with higher-level science classes such as Biology and Chemistry. The more I learned, the more fascinated I became with the subjects. The inner workings of the human body and the small world of chemistry astounded me, especially once I realized how they are interconnected. As I learned the mechanisms of the universe, I came to the realization that this was my calling.

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Life

kitchen. She was heading into the living room.

This room had more memories than any other. She had danced with her siblings and family in that room so many times. So many fun moments had occurred there. Too many for her to recall. She walked over to the black leather couch and plopped down like she normally would. It was so comfortable. Then it made her think about how long it would be until she got to sit and relax on it again. She got up and walked over to the front door. She opened it slowly. As she grabbed the screen door handle, she placed her hand flat on the wall parallel to her. She bit her lip as she held back more tears.

She took her hand off the wall and readjusted the duffel bag on her shoulder. She looked around the room one last time. Then she took a huge deep breath and stepped outside. Her family was waiting for her in the car. She climbed into the car with them and shut the door. She turned to her mom

who was wiping tears from her eyes. Then they started to drive.

After awhile they got to their destination. It was time. Everyone got out of the car. She grabbed her stuff out of the trunk. One by one she began to hug them. First her sister. Followed by her brother and step dad. Last up was her mom. Her mom grasped her tightly. They separated and her mom looked at her. "I'm gonna miss you so much baby girl!!" tears were falling from everyone's eyes. "I know mom." Her mom looked at her. "I hope so. This is the beginning of your



new life." She smiled back at her mom and said, "First I have to get through basic. Then we will talk about the new start." She winked at her mom and waved goodbye. Then she picked up her duffel bag and walked into MEPS knowing that each step would soon become the steps of a marching American soldier. She was filled with pride.

Questions

I knew science would be what my future would be in, but what would it be specifically? Perhaps I could be an astrophysicist, a doctor, or even both. After all, being overly-ambitious is not a bad quality. The possibilities were infinite before my eyes. While volunteering at Gateway Medical Center over the summer and at the Special Olympics I finally found the answer to all my



questions. I had decided to become a physician. As an astronomer it would be an overall rewarding experience peering into the cosmos, but I found an even more rewarding factor in medicine. I would be helping others as a doctor, and maybe I could even help pass on and instill some of the inquisitive

nature I had as a child to someone of a future generation.

Dec 5 St. Anthony's Health Center

Regular Meeting 6:00 PM.
Annual Christmas Program - Spouses Night.

Dec 12 Alton Sports Tap

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

Dec 19 Rolling Hills

Regular Meeting 6:00 pm. Club Christmas Party. Family night. Special guest will be Santa Claus to provide a preview of his upcoming world tour.

Dec 26 No Meeting

Holiday

Bill Hoagland, Program Director



Reach Within to Embrace Humanity

Ripper Of A Speech Blasts Competition

The following speech was given by 6th grader *Sophie Paterson* at the *Central Hawke's Bay Primary Schools Rotary* speech competition in New Zealand.



Do you know why we fart?
Flatulence, wind or farts, whatever you like to call them, is the production of the mixture of gases in the digestive tract, that are byproducts of the digestive process.

The average person farts about 14 times a day, which produces about half a litre of fart gas. (Personally, I think I fart more than 14 times a day).

This article should raise the reputation of this newsletter to a new level of respectability.

2. Camels
3. Zebras and my pony Free
4. Sheep
5. Cows
6. Elephants
7. Labradors and retrievers
8. Humans (vegetarians)
9. Humans (non-vegetarians)
10. Gerbils (also known as the desert rat)

If you are going to fart, do not sit by flames, because farts are very flammable.

Also, they can come motoring out of your body at 10 kmh.

No wonder some of you have holes in your undies!

Please do not panic if you find yourself trapped in a small space like a closet, as it is impossible to suffocate in your own farts. Unless Ben (my little brother) is in there with you!

Anyway next time you fart, don't think it's rude. Just know that everybody, oops, I mean, everybody, farts.

Thank you for listening to my fartastic speech.

Here's a little poem that I'd like to share with you.

"A fart can be useful
It gives the body ease.
It warms the bed in winter
And suffocates the fleas."

Hi, today I am going to talk to you about farts.

Some people think farts are rude and some people think farts are funny, like me.

I think farts are hilarious.

Farting is a fact of life. Everybody farts.

The Queen farts, superstars fart and I fart. We will fart until the day we die.

And apparently a person can still fart after death!

Farts are made up of the following: Nitrogen, the main ingredient making up 59 percent; next behind is hydrogen at 21 percent; 9 percent carbon dioxide; 7 percent methane, 3 percent oxygen and 1 percent other stuff.

But listen to this - hydrogen sulphide is the compound that makes them stink!

Here are the top 10 farters:

1. Termites

Club Officers 2011-12

President..... Mike Tillman
1902 Paris Dr., Godfrey, 466-1928
Vice-PresidentJasper Fisher
3885 Fosterburg Rd., Alton, 259-3177
SecretaryBob Hamilton
4003 Stoneledge Court, Godfrey, 466-4362
Treasurer..... John Hopkins
1014 Henry St, Alton, 474-2005
Executive Secretary.....Melissa Seymour
3026 Edwards St., Alton, 462-7206

Board of Directors 2011-12

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
Andy Bowen	Mike Fitzgerald	Dick Jones
Butch Chapel	Ebony Huddleston	Ron Mayhew
Wayne Sivia	Chuck Norman	Ken Spells
	Jeni Thompson	Sam Stemm
	Pete Zimmer	Gail Weinrich
		PP Roland Hansen