

# Alton Giant to take the field on Saturday at Rock Spring Park

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**ALTON** - **Alton** residents are being invited to attend the Alton Giant's (their new community vintage base ball team) first official Base Ball game this Saturday at 11:00 a. m. on the Upper Athletic Field at Rock Spring Park.

The Alton Giant will be joined on the field by the St. Louis Brown Stockings. Another team from St. Louis – The St. Louis Unions will also be playing on the Giant's home field against the St. Louis Brown Stockings in a 12:30 p.m. game and then the local Giant will play a second game against the St. Louis Unions scheduled for 2:00 p.m.

According to Alton Giant team organizer, **Greg Gelzinnis**, "We are very excited to play our first official Vintage Base Ball game and have been so appreciative of the help the

Brown Stockings and other Vintage Base Ball Clubs have been in helping us get started.” Gelzinnis added, “We had such great community support last fall when we played our exhibition game and have been working diligently since then to organize our own local team.”

The Alton Giant (yes, named for our own soon to be centurion – Robert Wadlow) is presently made up of John Garvey, Chris Garbs, Larry Leppert, & Tronde & Jeff Minnie of Alton, Gelzinnis & Mike McCauley of Godfrey, Wendy Hager of Wood River, & Jonathan Farris of Moro. Nathan Woodside, member of the Springfield Long Nine and area resident, has also been helping support the newly formed Giant. Coach Farris said, “We would certainly be happy to add a few more players to our Roster moving forward.” He continued, “Anyone interested in joining the Giant (men or women) can come out to Saturday’s games or contact Greg Gelzinnis at 618-550-9291 or during the work day at 618-465-7764.”

Vintage Base Ball is base ball (yes, it was two words originally) played by the rules and customs of any earlier period. Ballists wear old-style uniforms, either the early long trouser and shield shirt, or a later style lace shirt and knickers, and recreate the game based on rules and research of the various periods of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The activity of vintage base ball can be seen at open air museums, re-enactments and city parks and is played on both open grass fields and modern baseball diamonds. Some groups consider vintage base ball to be a new sport, but at its core, vintage base ball is a reflection of how baseball existed at an earlier time.

Gelzinnis, who also chairs the Rock Spring 2020 revitalization committee, said “Creating a Vintage Base Ball Team that will play their home games at the upper athletic field at Rock Spring Park fits perfectly in the revitalization plans as another way to utilize Rock Spring.” He added, “The Alton Giant have been invited to play a number of games in the surrounding area this season, but will be back “home” to close the season on Saturday, October 8.

Those who plan on attending the games at Rock Spring this weekend are encouraged to park in the large open parking lot in the middle of the park adjacent to the ball field. Fans should also bring lawn chairs for seating as there is only 1 set of bleachers in the park at this time. Concessions of brats, hotdogs, soft drinks and water will be available for sale during the game.

The Giant would also like to thank Logo-It & Granny’s Uniforms in Upper Alton for helping the team secure their uniforms and Dr. Pepper for helping with concession items. Gelzinnis said enthusiastically, “We truly are a community team.”