

# **Pole Event Pep Rally Ready's Area Students for National Event**

September 16 2010 3:53 PM

September 22, 2010 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for See You At The Pole, a student-initiated and student-led movement that started in the Ft. Worth, TX suburb of Burleson, Texas in 1990. What started as a simple gathering of students who were moved to pray for their school, community leaders, and nation now spreads literally around the globe touching millions.

In preparation for this year's event, themed "REVEAL" and based on the scripture Matthew 6:9-13, six (6) community church youth leaders and youth workers (called SPASM – Student Pastors & Student Ministers) representing Main Street UMC, Bethalto UMC, Godfrey First UMC, First Baptist of Wood River, The Salvation Army, & Evangelical UCC have created a very exciting SYATP Pre-event Rally which will take place at the Riverbender Community Center in downtown Alton on Tuesday, September 21, 2010 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. The event is going to feature on-the-rise Christian Praise Band – The Great Romance, and The Passion Painter – Andy Raines. According to SPASM member and Main Street Youth Council Chairman, Greg Gelzinnis, "We have wanted to do something special for our students and help get them prepared for SYATP for quite a number of years." Gelzinnis continued, "Thanks to the cooperative spirit of SPASM and our community churches, the resources were made available to finally make something big happen right here in Alton." Bobby Davis, youth leader at Bethalto UMC and newest SPASM member said, "When I told my students that The Great Romance was going to be playing at our event, they were totally stoked!"

Doors at the Community Center will open at 6:00 p.m. and there is a \$5 cover charge that is being requested. The Community Center snack bar will also be open for those students wishing to get something to eat or drink. At 7:00 p.m. students will break-out into separate groups based on the High School or Middle School that they attend. Pastor Nicole Cox of Main Street and SPASM member said, "It is our hope during this time that students can get comfortable and plan the events that they will help host at their

school's flag pole on Wednesday morning." She continued, "Since SYATP has to be entirely student lead, this will give students an opportunity to go over and share their plans for the next day." Mike Soloman, Youth Pastor at Godfrey First and fellow SPASM member remarked, "The event is also open to all Middle School students and we will be having a break-out session with them as well to make sure that they are ready for Wednesday morning's events too!"

The Great Romance will be taking the stage at 7:30 p.m. and will play until 8:45 p.m. The Great Romance is made up of Matt Vollmar on rhythm guitar and vocals, Andy Schneider on bass guitar, and Matt Stephens on lead guitar and vocals. According to Vollmar, "In January of 2007 the group made a conscious decision on what they believe God has called them today which is lead worship." Vollmar added, "Over the last several years we have had the privilege to open for many of today's top Christian artists like Audio Adrenaline, Big Daddy Weave, & Kutless, but it is worshiping with students regardless of the size of the venue that is our passion." Bassist Andy Schneider remarked, "The band is planning a national tour in 2011 that will take them from coast to coast a dream come true for each of us."

The finale of the evening will feature Andy Raines – The Passion Painter, based here in the Greater Alton Area who will be creating a piece of unique "sacred art" while The Great Romance plays their final song. A gifted artist in his own right, Andy

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