



## 2014 SAM URZETTA CLASSIC RAISES MORE THAN \$15,000!

This year's tournament was held at Lima Country Club on a picture-perfect Friday, Aug. 1. More than 200 golfers participated, thus enabling the Alumni Foundation to raise over \$15,000. Proceeds will, as always, be used to fund education-oriented grants for the benefit of ER students across all grade levels. In addition to another great turnout of golfers, our success was further ensured by the generous support of more than 150 individuals and businesses who donated cash, gifts, and prizes totaling over \$17,000. Since 2007, this tournament has raised over \$95,000 in support of the Foundation's mission.

The winning foursome on Island Oaks was captained by ER '11 graduate **Joey Quinzi** (his third time heading up a winning team!); his fellow players were **John Quinzi**, **Ken Pearson**, and **John Steigerwald**. The captain of the winning Charleston Pines team was **Gary DiFlorio**; playing with Gary were his son, **Patrick DiFlorio**, **John Barnhardt**, and **Eddie O'Hara**. 'Proficiency awards' (such as most-accurate drives and closest to the pin) on Island Oaks went to **Ursula Arnold**, **Bill LaForte**, **Kristan Nash**, **John Quinzi** (who had a hole-in-one), **Ben Tobin**, and **Carm Urzetta**. On the Charleston Pines course these awards were garnered by **Jack Conners**, **Marty D'Ambrose**, **Gary DiFlorio**, **Don Quinn**, **John Ross**, and **Eileen Seidel**. The putting contest prize money went to **Bob DiBerardinis**.



During the awards luncheon, which was attended by 225 golfers, guests, and tournament volunteers, the Foundation's 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to Tom Conners, ER class of 1944. (Please see story on opposite

page. The award was presented by **John Baynes**, who serves on the ERAF Board of Directors and the tournament's planning committee.

In receiving this award, Mr. Conners joined a prestigious group of other ER alumni who have been so honored. Previous recipients are **Nick Verzella** ('44), **Sam Urzetta** ('44), **Larry Weise** ('54), **Brig. Gen. Richard McPhee** ('74), **Rear Adm. Donald Quinn** ('75), and the **Hon. Victoria Argento** ('80).

Mark your calendar! Next year's Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic is set for Friday, Aug. 7, again at Lima Country Club; registration forms will be available by no later than April 15. Participating teams must include at least one ER alumnus, resident, or business person, a current or former employee of the ER School District, or a tournament sponsor.

**Please note the Tournament Committee needs at least three new members for next year** due to the inability of three current members to return! If you are willing to help, please contact me at [ctobin@frontiernet.net](mailto:ctobin@frontiernet.net) or 526-6120 for more information.

– Carl Tobin

Please visit the Alumni Foundation's Website, at [www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm](http://www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm)!

### **TOM CONNERS RECEIVES ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD**

*As part of our Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic awards banquet on a beautiful Friday, Aug. 1, the Alumni Foundation proudly honored Thomas A. Conners, Jr. with its annual Distinguished Alumni Award. The plaque presented to him reads “Teacher, community leader, mentor, and friend to generations of ER youth: Mr. East Rochester.” A brief biography follows....*

The East Rochester Alumni Foundation has proudly presented its 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award to Thomas A. Conners, Jr. This year’s honoree is a lifelong ER resident who has served his country, his village, and its students faithfully and with great distinction for more than 60 years.

Upon his graduation from ERHS in 1944, Mr. Conners served in the U.S. Army for two years during WWII. After his honorable discharge he attended SUNY Geneseo, where he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education. Beginning in 1951 he devoted himself to the ER School District, retiring in ’85 after 34 years. During his career he taught eighth-grade social studies and coached junior high basketball and tennis. Mr. Conners was also the ‘Voice of the Bombers,’ announcing varsity football games from 1976 to ’92. During this period, he also oversaw operations at the Kate Gleason Memorial Swimming Pool and joined fellow teachers in painting houses to help make ends meet.

Mr. Conners was a volunteer ER fireman for five years, starting in 1952. He’s also been an active member of the ER American Legion Memorial Post since that same year, St. Jerome’s parish since 1957, and the ER Rotary Club since ’78. Mr. Conners served as a Village Board Trustee from 1979 to ’87, also serving as Deputy Mayor the last four years of his term. He was our Village Historian for eight years, and co-chaired ER’s Centennial committee and yearlong celebration in 1997. Mr. Conners is also the proud father of seven children and, word has it, that at age 88 he remains their undisputed leader.

An excerpt from his DAA nomination reads, “Tom was, and continues to be, an iconic figure as an ER educator. He had a particular gift for connecting with students who didn’t find the regimentation of public schooling to their liking. I often hear tales of his remediation sessions with ER kids who now, as adults, share their appreciation of his humor, directness, and love for learning and history.”

There are very few ER residents or alumni who don’t know and admire Tom Conners. He’s been with us all our lives. Again from his nomination document... “He sees ER people as one family and believes in the potential of every single member of our community. Tom believes that 99% of life is showing up, and he encourages individual potential by showing up and supporting thousands of ER alumni, whether it’s welcoming them onto his lawn during the annual firemen’s parade or greeting them on the sidewalks of his hometown, at St. Jerome’s, or in the aisles at Wegmans. For Tom, the connection to his students and his community has never, and will never, be broken.”

The Alumni Foundation invites you to join us in honoring Thomas A. Conners, Jr. for his distinguished service to the town/village and residents of East Rochester and to the students who have prospered under his tutelage. He provides us all with an inspiring example to follow, and sound evidence to support our conviction that we did indeed grow up in ‘the Greatest Little Town in the World.’



### **ERAF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Board members:** Chris Argento, Hon. Victoria Argento, Denise Ash, John Baynes, Jerry Cilento, Mary Hopkins Cooney, Katie Conners DeVito, Mary Burton Estey, Linda Forbes, John Griffith, Marilyn Tuttle Lopez, Anita Mance, Dina Marcoccia, Sam Morabito, Pam Narsisian, Peter Obourn, Patty Pullano, Tom Quinzi, Carl Tobin, Helen Urzetta Tortorici, and Richard Stutzman, Jr. (ex-officio)

**Former board members:** Terry Brown-Steiner, Jim Burlingame, Tim Henry, Dr. Howard Maffucci, David Morabito, Peter Nicolucci, Fred Ricci, Barb Pierce Stoner, Patrick Tobin, Sam Urzetta, and Nick Verzella

*more ERAF information on next page...*



On Tuesday, Dec. 2, the Greater Rochester community will come together to ROC the Day, and the East Rochester Alumni Foundation hopes to help make it a huge success.

ROC the Day is a 24-hour giving opportunity to support all eligible not-for-profits, including ERAF, in the nine-county Rochester area. Community members are encouraged to visit [ROCtheDay.org](http://ROCtheDay.org), a secure online giving platform, to contribute to any participating non-profit organization. All money raised during ROC the Day stays local. Donors have the ability to make a positive impact by giving to one or more organizations to support their personal

philanthropic passions. Donors and not-for-profits can share their investment activity with friends, family, coworkers, and social networks to increase awareness of this community-wide effort.

This is our first year participating, and we're hoping to inspire lots of ROCstar donors to contribute to the Alumni Foundation this year. We wanted to alert the community to this activity and invite you to join us in supporting these 24 hours of unprecedented non-profit giving.

### SAVE THE DATE! FOURTH-ANNUAL EAST ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL 10 am - 5 pm Saturday, Dec. 13

*Much more info to come as the date approaches – Please check [www.erchamber.org](http://www.erchamber.org) for updates!*

The East Rochester Christmas Festival will be held at several locations in and around the village, including the school campus, Eyer Park, and the new Town/Village Hall. The Festival is sponsored by the ER Chamber of Commerce, with assistance from the Town/Village of ER, the ER Association of Churches, the ER Alumni Foundation, the ER Rotary, and the ER School District. For the past three years, it has provided visitors with activities such as music and caroling, children's stories, food and item vendors, games and crafts for all ages, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, sales and giveaways by local merchants, and horse-drawn carriage rides.

*Organizers are working to make our fourth-annual holiday celebration even bigger and better!  
We look forward to making this an event everyone will enjoy and we can all be proud of.*

### **BLOCK HOLIDAY DECORATION CONTEST RETURNS!**

Have your neighborhood displays up by Saturday, Dec. 13; voting (on the Chamber's Website) runs through Wednesday, Dec. 24. The best-decorated block will receive a grand prize from Salvatore's!

## RETIREE FEATURE



Chances are, anyone who has enrolled in East Rochester schools over the past three decades has been guided through the process by **Jane Slater**, who retired at the end of October after more than 30 years with the district – most of which have been spent in registration and census positions. Mrs. Slater plans to spend much of her new, relaxed lifestyle taking short vacations around the Finger Lakes area, catching up on her reading, and spending more time with family and friends. But the former Jane Thomas, who graduated from ERHS in 1964 (and has been an adviser with the ER Fire Department Color Guard and Explorer Post for more than 25 years and two years, respectively), will also be thinking about the countless students she's come to know during her time with the district. "I've enjoyed the interaction with all the kids, both elementary and junior/senior high. I've especially loved registering the new PK and kindergarten students, and then watching them as they grow," Mrs. Slater says. "I've been so fortunate to see my son (Rick, ERHS '86) go through and graduate from East Rochester schools, and I'm so proud my grandson (sixth-grader Sam) is following our tradition."

***What she'll miss most:** "All my friends I've made over the years. But mostly I'll miss my before-school visits with my four favorite boys (Sam, seventh-graders Sean F. and T.J. S., and senior Matt H.) every morning. That's the best way to start the day."*

***What she'll miss least:** "The 5:45 alarm, and cleaning the snow from my car!"*