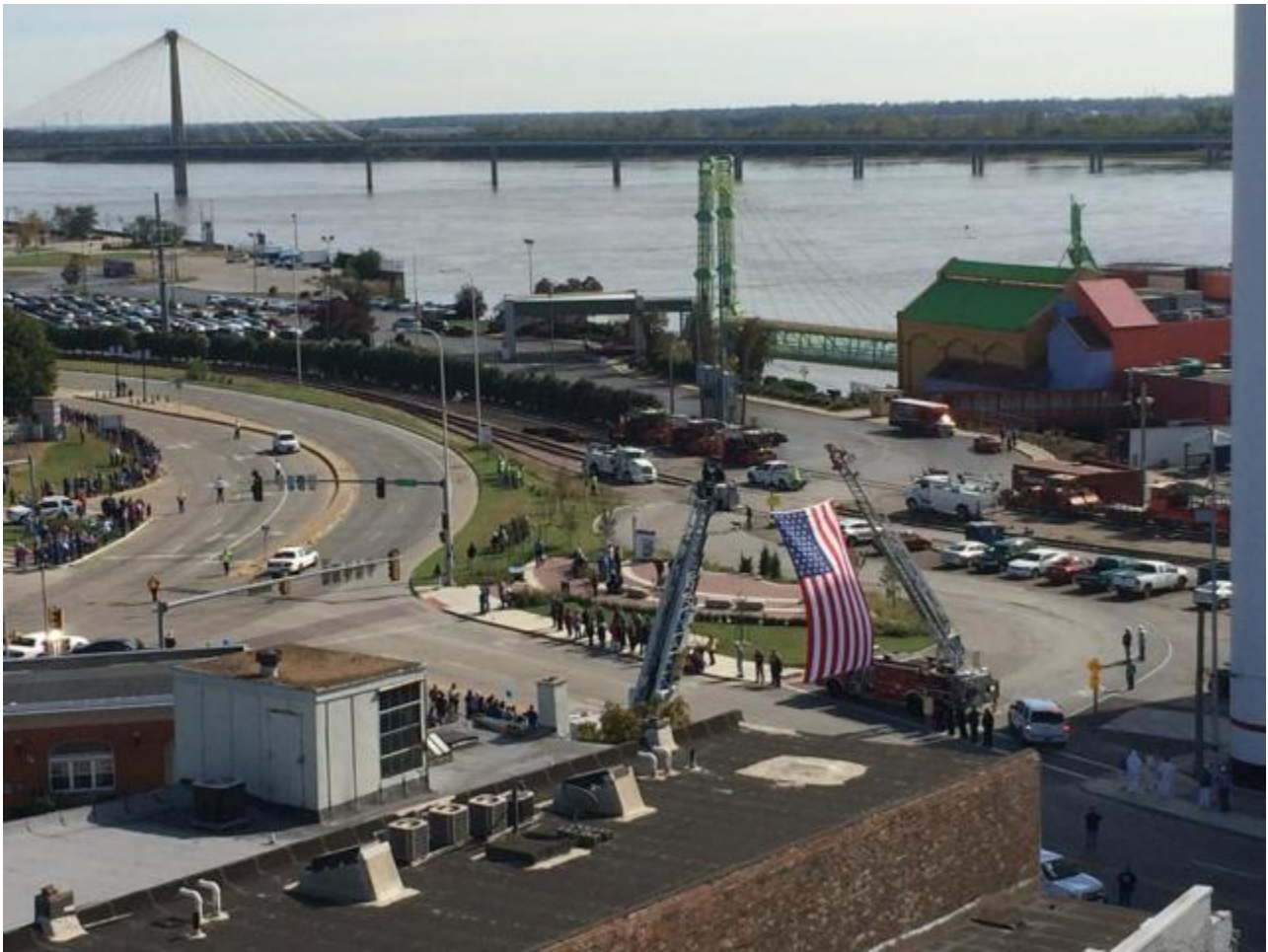


HONOR AND RESPECT: Hundreds come out in Alton/Godfrey to say goodbye to Officer Blake Snyder

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON/GODFREY - It was an emotional, yet nearly an unprecedented show of support day for law enforcement and **Officer Blake Snyder Thursday** with his funeral and subsequent several-mile procession to **Godfrey**, his final resting place.

St. Louis County Police Officer Snyder, 33, was killed in the line of duty in the early morning hours of **Oct. 6**. Snyder was an **Alton High School** graduate and was born and raised in Godfrey.

The funeral service at **St. Louis Family Church** in **Chesterfield, Mo.**, was both emotional and stirring for those who attended. Many waited outside the funeral home in Chesterfield to honor him.

As the funeral procession continued, the Missouri side was lined at different locations with thousands of individuals standing to pay their respects. People lined the route and numerous spots from Alton to Godfrey.

In Downtown Alton, people poured out of their businesses to stand in respect for Officer Snyder. **Marquette Catholic** and **St. Mary's** students marched down from the school and formed a line on Landmarks across from **Ardent Mills**.

Alton Fire Department Bagpiper **Dan Whiteside** performed a powerful rendition of "Amazing Grace" while the procession made its way through Downtown Alton.

The area near **Melville Dairy**, **Dollar General** and those businesses in Godfrey were filled with friends and those who wanted to pay him respect. **Valhalla Cemetery** was filled with press representatives and people as the procession headed to Godfrey.



Amanda Harris organized the efforts to line the streets of Godfrey in support of Blake Snyder.

She said **Sunset Bar & Grill**, Dollar General, Melville Dairy and the **Clifton Country Inn**, with several other businesses in Alton and Godfrey were so supportive of their efforts. She sold stickers in support of the family at Valhalla and planned to give the donations to his wife. Harris also helped with organization of the Class of 2001 Vigil for Blake and family earlier in the week.

“It is so emotional so tragic that such a young life is lost,” she said. “But it’s utterly amazing at the way the community has responded to the call. We have called the community to help us honor him and in memory of him.”

Missy Raley said she is extremely proud of Blake’s class, Alton High School class of 2001, for their efforts of support this week.

Several 2001 class members lined the streets as the procession made it to Valhalla Cemetery in Godfrey today.

“I attended services in St. Louis, then I lined the streets out here,” she said. “I couldn’t get back to Godfrey. I am proud of the class of 2001 for the vigil, and their reaction of

trying to celebrate him. It is very sad to lose someone so young with such a young family. With him being an officer, it hurts even more.”

Raley said she thinks Blake Snyder’s death has affected nearly everyone in the region, one way or another.

“Whether you knew Blake personally or he was just a guy you grew up with, or you knew a member of his family, with the size of Alton and Godfrey, everyone is connected somehow. This is just so personal for so many people.”



Village officials, local law enforcement and Godfrey Fire and ESDA all coordinated the funeral procession efforts in conjunction with local businesses that are located along the projected route to ensure operations go as smooth as possible. St. Louis County Police was the lead group in the procession.

Snyder was shot almost immediately after responding to a domestic violence call on Oct. 6th. His partner wounded the alleged shooter, **Trenton Forster**, who has since been charged with Snyder’s murder.

Snyder, his wife, **Elizabeth**, and young son lived in Edwardsville at the time of his death. His parents, **Dick and Peggy Snyder**, live in Godfrey. His brother, **Adam**, practices dentistry in Bethalto.

Area law enforcement and first responders joined together on the Alton/Godfrey side in force to honor their lost brother, Blake.

Godfrey Fire Protection District Chief Erik Kambarian led efforts through Godfrey to make the process smooth to Valhalla Cemetery. He said for law enforcement, fire department members and first responders, this has been a tough week. He said for the region, it has been an “extremely sad time.”

Kambarian is proud that **Backstoppers** has apparently raised more than \$100,000 for Blake Snyder’s family and funds continue to come in.

“Officer Snyder was from Godfrey and went to school here,” Kambarian said. “He went to college here and played soccer at Lewis and Clark Community College. A lot of our guys here in Godfrey had some sort of connection with him.

“I went to school with his brother-in-law, in Granite City. It has been difficult for all of us to process it. We never want anything like this to happen. We did our best to ensure Officer Snyder and his family were honored and processed from Chesterfield to Godfrey and received with honor and respect.”

