

National Day of Prayer inspires hope across the Riverbend

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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ALTON - As the rain poured down outside, local leaders and members of the community took sanctuary in the gymnasium at the YWCA in Downtown Alton to pray.

Hosted by Rotary of the Riverbend, the event ran concurrently with thousands of other National Day of Prayer observances throughout the nation, with the goal of bringing all faiths together to pray for a number of topics.

Reverend Ron Wenzel of Rosewood Heights Community Church & First Baptist Church in Hartford served as the event's Master of Ceremony and introduced several area speakers as they led the group in prayer.

Prior to the beginning of the ceremony, the Alton High School Air Force Junior ROTC Color Guard, including Summer Murphy, Tyler Marshall, Alex Barnard and Jeremy Grover, presented the colors. Marquette Catholic High School student Nia Owens led in the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, which the entire audience joined in and beautifully sang along.

Marquette Catholic students also performed a captivating rendition of "Lead Me Lord" for the audience.

Alton Mayor Brant Walker and Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick joined together to proclaim the day as National Day of Prayer in both of their municipalities. Alton Police Chief Jake Simmons was also in attendance.

A variety of prayers were given as part of the ceremony, including prayers for the future of our youth, sanctity of life, ministry to the sick and successful health care reform, education, business, family, media, government and military, and for the church and national unity for the common good.



