

Baird hosts another moving Memorial Day Sunset Ceremony at Alton's National Cemetery

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - As usual, the 12th Annual Memorial Day Sunset Ceremony at Alton's National Cemetery on Monday night, May 29, was moving and a special tribute to veterans who have lost their lives serving their country.

The event's organizer - Richard Baird - has carried the tradition on year after year and is especially proud of those who participate and attend the Sunset Ceremony on busy Memorial Day occasions.

"The federal government recognizes the land here at Alton's National Cemetery as a special place," he said. "Time stretches here across unexplainable and vast differences in space. Time carries us indeed from one moment to the next. Right here, right now, time

truly stands still. Emotions settle in our souls in a meaningful manner. Here, we pause and digest life's intrinsic value. Here in the abstract patters of shows, voices cry out and yet silence prevails."

Alton Mayor Brant Walker thanked Baird for his dedication through all the years of organizing the special Memorial Day ceremony. Baird also commended Walker for always attending the ceremony through his entire administration.

"It is an honor to be here," Walker said. "Memorial Day has special meaning for me with seven uncles and a father in the military. Today is a day not just honoring veterans, but also people who lost lives. Today is a solemn day of remembrance and a day where we should properly set aside time for contemplation. We should ask ourselves where would we be without the men and women who have served in the military and given us the precious gift of freedom they have given us."

A spokesperson from the National Cemetery Administration delivered a message, and Marquette Catholic sophomore Nia Owens did a powerful rendition of America's National Anthem at the Monday event.

Others include Alton Middle School students joined policemen and firemen in leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Alton High School R.O.T.C. members also presented colors and performed the Missing Man Table Top Ceremony, bagpipes and drums, Matt Taul singing, Echo Taps and more.







