

Robert Ryan Provides Keynote Remarks at Alton VFW's Annual Ceremony

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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ALTON - The annual Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1308 Veterans Day program was once again enticing, with World War II POW 2nd Lt. Robert Ryan, USAAF, serving as the keynote speaker.

Ryan, a long-time local attorney and 95 years old, spoke of his time and experiences in World War II when his plane was shot down in 1944 in Eastern Germany. Ryan said his aircraft was going after an aircraft production plant when it was hit. Ryan talked of the deprivations he and the other prisoners experienced and how Gen. George Patton liberated his prison camp.

Bill Perkins, USMC retired, was master of ceremonies. Lon Carter, the Post Chaplain, did the invocation, Sherry Hornsey the National Anthem, and the Scouts did the Pledge of Allegiance.

“Veterans Day is a time to recognize everybody, both peacetime and wartime vets,” said Stout. “We had Boy Scouts and ROTC cadets here and I think it was important for people to hear first-hand Mr. Ryan’s story. I hoped it opened some of the teens’ eyes about what a sacrifice you have to make to leave your family for 2-4 years. Not everybody can do it.”

Alton Mayor Brant Walker, Post Commander Dan Morrel and VFW State Adjunct Commander Dave Stout provided remarks. Annette Wilson and Wayne Able provided the Medal of Honor Wreath, Ryan did the POW/MIA wreath, Lynn Lenker the Gold Star Mother wreath and Tom Wilson and Barbara Butler the VFW Wreath.

Auxiliary President Judy Wigger, and Alton Leathernecks' Mark Nelson and American Legion Post 126's Wally Ozark also participated in the ceremony.









[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)