



# **Sierra Club, Smith-Williams, Ward 4 Neighborhoods, Sponsor MLK Day of Service Monday In Alton**

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CLUB**

ALTON - Martin Luther King Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities. It is held annually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January. The Sierra Club is an organization that believes in the power of people working together. We work towards a just, equitable and sustainable future built on a foundation of racial, economic and gender equity – where all people benefit from a healthy thriving planet.

The volunteers will clean up some of the area's litter, honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and build better relations with People of Color. Environmental injustice, including the proliferation of climate change, has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and low-income communities in the United States. Alton's population is just over 25% Black.

In leaning into the message that Dr. King spread ~ the power of service ~ the Sierra Club is teaming up with Alton Alderwoman Tammy Smith-Williams and her Ward 4 neighborhoods, which have mostly black residents. Tammy is a strong, black female leader that we are pleased to know and work alongside of. The Sierra Club believes that working alongside communities that are different than us gives us a better understanding of the issues of people of color/Indigenous people and a chance to see intersections with our issues that aren't apparent when we are separate.

Volunteers will start from two locations, working towards each other: Hellrung Park and James Killion/Salu Park. James H. Killion was a major advocate of integration within Alton. He annexed the Oakwood Area into the Alton City Limits so the majority black population of that area could enjoy city services. He was also a member of the Alton Human Relations Commission and of the NAACP. It seems prudent that the litter clean up encompasses the Park that bears his namesake.

Right now, the nation finds itself in another moment of national racial reckoning. The Sierra Club is trying to show up and work on equity issues in a variety of ways. This Alton MLK Socially Distanced Clean Up is a simple act to acknowledge the strong black community in the area, while working with them on future projects. Please consider dedicating an hour or two in this endeavor!

**Monday, January 18th**

**10 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Meet for free clean up supplies at the Hellrung Park Picnic Shelter or the James H. Killion/Salu Park Picnic Shelter before you head out to the litter locations. *Note: Masks*

*at the supply station are Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there will be no refreshments available.*

If you don't need supplies and want to do a small stretch of your own pet-peeve littered area, please do so and report back to Christine. She can notify the Probation Alton Cleanup Partnership of where they can pick up your full trash bags, or you can simply take them back to your household trash container. Christine Favilla 618-401-7870.

Inclimate weather postpones this clean up to the month of February, Black History Month. Date TBD. Text Christine the morning of MLK Day, if you are unsure about a cancellation: 618-401-7870.