





**ALTON - A dedication was held on Thursday morning for the engraved bricks surrounding the new flagpole at James H. Killion at Salu Park in Alton.**

**Steve Thomas, one of those appointed with the James H. Killion Park at Salu Beautification Committee, made the keynote remarks at the event. Also on the Salu committee appointed by Mayor Walker are: Alderwoman Tammy Smith, Abe Barham, Monica Semnacher, Sheila Goins and Cass Shepard.**

**Thomas said he couldn't be more proud of the effort by Alton Public Works Director Bob Barnhart and staff and the commitment and vision of Mayor Walker in the development of James H. Killion at Salu Park.**

**"James Killion Park is one of the most used and now most beautiful parks in the City of Alton. I want to say thank you to all of those who have made brick purchases. I am thankful to Mayor Walker and Kim Clark for their work in direction of the renovation of the park. It has become one of the premier parks in the City of Alton parks because of investing the time and money."**

**A new flagpole was positioned recently at the center of a memorial brick fund-raising campaign area within James H. Killion at Salu Park.**

Mayor Walker and Thomas pointed out the vast improvements at the park from the updated basketball courts, sidewalks, pavilion and so much more.

James H. Killion was the first black person hired by Laclede Steel in Alton. He worked there until his retirement in 1983, after 38 years. He was a union leader, and was the first black person elected to office within that union, which he helped to create. He was also a member of the D-Day forces, and was a reservist during the Korean Conflict.

In Alton, Killion was responsible for the city's annexation of the Oakwood area. He was a leader in the United Way, a baseball coach, on the advisory board of the former St. Joseph Hospital and a referee for junior high basketball.

Mayor Walker saluted Steve Thomas and the Salu Beautification Committee for their work in the trying times of COVID-19 to keep the park at the forefront of discussion.

"I am very proud of the park," he said. "When I took office, it was almost unplayable and unusable. We have done a lot of work on the park and there is still more to do. It is great that kids in our community once again have a great park to play in."

Alderman Smith continued about the progress at James H. Killion Park at Salu and said: "This park is selling commemorative bricks and will be placing them this year. The bricks are \$50 and you can put a personalized message there and will last a lifetime. We want people to come to the park and enjoy it with their families. Our next project will be focused on the Pavilion and the restrooms. Thanks to everyone for their continued efforts in helping to make this park a nice place to visit and enjoy."

For more information about the memorial bricks at Salu, contact Alderman Smith at (618) 975-9020.



[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)