

30th Alton Juneteenth Celebration Was Most Special One Yet

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
June 21 2021 4:42 PM







ALTON - The 30th Annual Juneteenth Celebration in Alton was a celebration in many forms. First, it marked the annual observance of the oldest known declaration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. This year, it was especially special because President Biden, Congress, and Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker made it a national holiday from this time forward.

"The observance of Juneteenth is about the journey and achievement of African Americans from a horrific period of enslavement to the pinnacle of human endeavors," said Abe Lee Barham. "It is a story of pride, resilience, and determination that will always be of historical and spiritual importance - as it serves us well to understand that together, we can overcome all obstacles in our path."

"Again, we have the opportunity to look back at this nearly century and a half journey of progress. We pay homage to those who have gone before us, those that have paved the road for freedom - many with their lives. We stand on their shoulders. We, as a collective, from all walks of life, are a part of this victory, we celebrate freedom."

Bubbling Brown Sugar of MIX 99.5 FM was the hostess of the event Saturday at Killion Park in Salu in Alton. Vendors, prizes, food, and fun were all available Saturday for free thanks to the Juneteenth Committee in Alton.







The committee said: "The Alton Juneteenth Committee is committed to continuing the historical tradition of our ancestors by celebrating this holiday to nurture and facilitate the empowerment of our community through education, through partnerships, and interaction with community resources and networking that will provide community enrichment."

The event went from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. The Dirty Mugs Band, Recording Artist Saman, and Caldwell ENTertainment provided live performances along with the Boys and Girls Club of Alton.

There was a health fair tent that provided community resources and those included the SIU Dental College. Blood pressure and blood sugar screenings were provided by OSF and the Urban League Mobile Van. The Madison County Mobile Health Van was also on-site for COVID-19 vaccinations.

The Grandpa Gang was recognized for its unbelievable work in the community with Christmas Wonderland.

Minister Joyce Elliott was recognized as the engine behind the celebration. She later passed the torch to Anne Johnson, Carolyn Thompson, Lee Barham, and Marquato Rattler.

The Juneteenth Committee, since 1991, has worked tirelessly to make it a grand celebratory event, and Saturday may have been the biggest and best to date in its 30-year history.







