



Christmas Spirit In Air For Annual Community Tree Lighting Event, Video Included

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - A strong Christmas spirit was in the air with a massive turnout Friday night for the annual Community Tree Lighting at Lincoln-Douglas Square. The Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club provides a beautiful tree every year for Downtown Alton.

Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived at 6 p.m., then at 6:45 p.m. Alton Mayor David Goins turned on the switch for the lights.

Songs were provided by area Girl Scout Troops and the Great Rivers Choral Society. Reverend Sheila Goins of the Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Mayor David Goins' wife, blessed the tree.

Other speakers included Rotary Club President Steve Schwartz and Salvation Army Captain Cassy Grey. The Salvation Army kicked off the “Tree of Lights” campaign Friday night with 2021 Chairpeople Taylor and Lily Freer on the stage. Chris Miller, Vice President of Alton Main Street, was the emcee.

Mayor Goins was thrilled to turn on the lights for the display.

“I am honored to be here as mayor and do the countdown for the lighting of the Community Christmas Tree,” Alton Mayor Goins said. “It is a beautiful and grand

event. My heart is full and I am happy to be here. We couldn't do this last year and to come and see so many come out on a beautiful, crisp night it is wonderful."

Sheila Goins said: "The tree lighting is an amazing and festive event and ignites unity. "This was an awesome night in the Alton community and it was an honor to lead it in prayer.

"I knew there would be a lot of people here but my expectations have been exceeded. It is time for us to come together, it is time to live and love again but also be safe with COVID."

Alton Main Street, one of the event coordinators, thanked the following sponsors who have made this event possible: Illinois American Water, Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery, Alton Memorial Hospital, CNB Bank & Trust, 1st Mid-America Credit Union, Poputopia Gourmet Popcorn and Sweets, Picture This & More, Sam's Loans, Sheppard, Morgan & Schwaab, Chiro One, The Salvation Army, Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club, Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau, OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center, City of Alton, Riverbender.com, The Telegraph, WBGZ Radio and AdVantage.

For more on the night, see the [Riverbender.com](https://www.riverbender.com) video above.









