



# **Holiday Spirit Is In The Air Once Again: Alton Tree Lighting Ceremony Draws Large Crowd**

by Randy Manning

November 18 2022 10:07 PM

More pics at: <https://www.randymanning.com/Alton-Tree-Lighting-Ceremony>



Alton-Godfrey  
**Rotary**  
Club

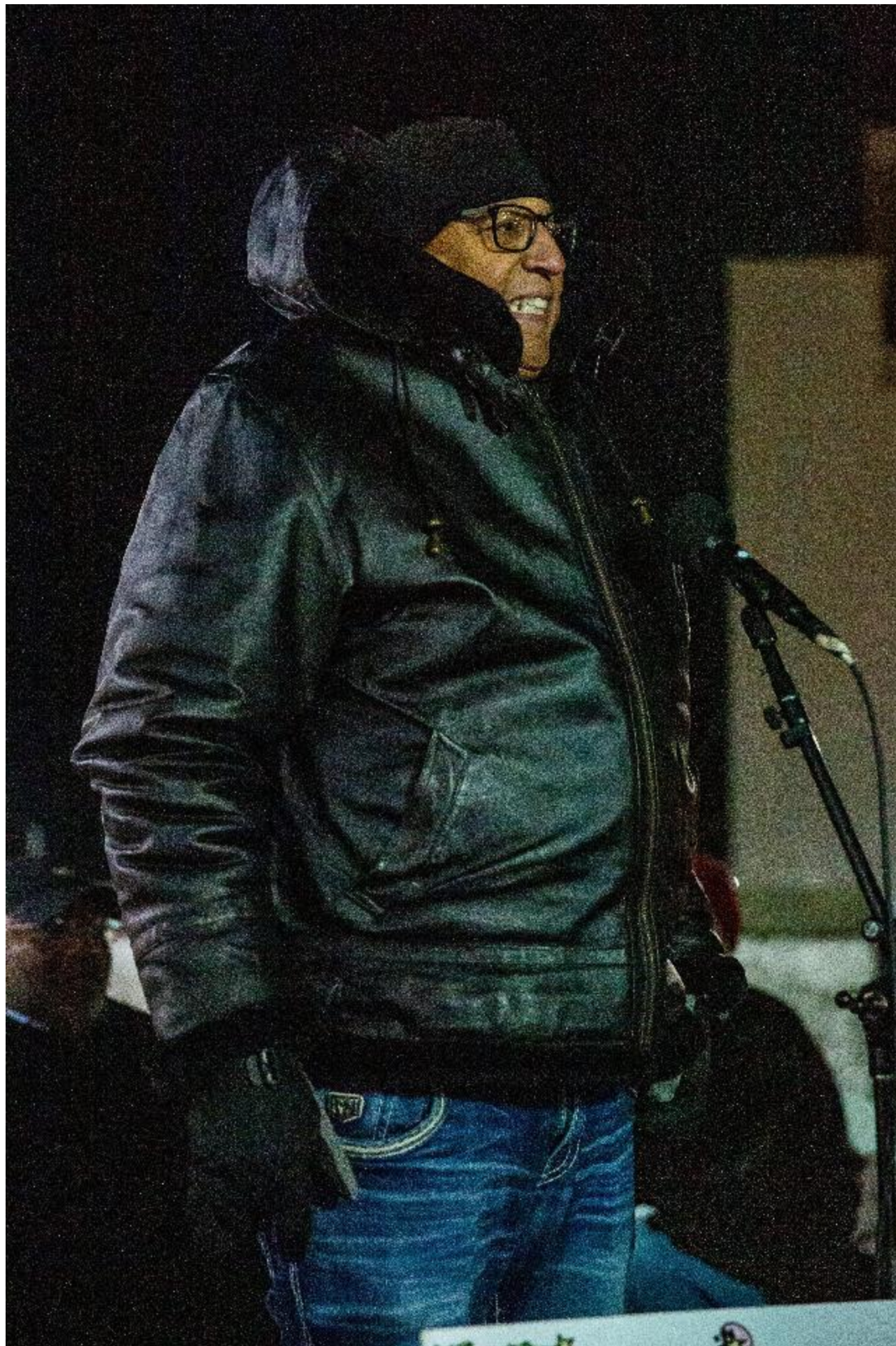


**COMMUNITY  
CHRISTMAS TREE**



ALTON - It was a brisk night Friday for the Annual Community Tree Lighting at Lincoln-Douglas Square in Alton, but it was packed with people who were ready to get into the holiday spirit.







The arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus kicked the celebration off at 6 p.m. Friday. The free festivities included caroling, cookies, and hot cocoa and continued until 6:45 p.m. when Mayor David Goins flipped the lights on the beautiful tree, which is provided by the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club. Many took pictures with Santa and costumed holiday characters. Sarah McGibany, Alton Main Street executive director, said it was cold but those in attendance were definitely in the holiday spirit Friday night. "It was a little cold but people started filling up Lincoln Douglas Square by 6 p.m.," she said. "By 6 p.m. it was filled with people. It was an excellent turnout and has such a great tradition. I want to remind everyone to shop local when they start their holiday shopping and come to Downtown Alton for their gift-giving. This is the kickoff for the holiday shopping downtown." Mayor Goins loves the Christmas season and the tree lighting is always a wonderful kickoff. "There was great attendance in spite of the cold," he said. "This celebration is counted as a staple in the community to kick off the Christmas season. It was fantastic this year. I am elated to be here. Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year and to be a part of that is amazing." Carols in the air kept the Christmas spirit alive throughout the evening, and there was a blessing of the tree. Other speakers include a representative from Alton Main Street, the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club President, and the Salvation Army, who will be kicking off their red kettle "Tree of Lights" campaign. The public also contributed numerous non-perishable food donations to the giant "Castle of Cans" to benefit the food pantry at the Salvation Army.





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