

# **Alton Wreaths Across America Committee Shares Gesture Of True American Spirit With Uvalde, Texas, Group**

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UVALDE, TEXAS/ALTON, IL. - The community of Uvalde, Texas has been reeling since a tragic shooting on May 24, 2022, when an 18-year-old gunman - Salvador Ramos - wielding an AR-15-style rifle, killed 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in the community, a small city west of San Antonio.

Melissa Federspill of the Uvalde Leader-News said recently that this year with the school shooting, "there was not too much going on to try to push for Wreaths Across America."

That was before the Alton Wreaths Across America Committee valiantly stepped in recently to offer a gesture that is being talked about across the country.

Uvalde, Texas, has only been registered as an official Wreaths Across America location for one year. In what was described as a gesture in the true American spirit, the Alton Wreaths Across America Committee had raised more than enough wreaths to honor all of their local veterans. Margaret Hopkins, leader of the group, connected with volunteers for Hillcrest Cemetery in Uvalde in an effort to not only honor the areas locally interred veterans but also their entire community.

"When meeting with our Alton Wreaths Across America Committee recently, I mentioned the opportunity to assist the Uvalde, Texas," Hopkins, a WAA volunteer for Alton National Cemetery for many years, said.

"Our members were so honored to do so," she added. "We voted to use 600 wreaths from our 'bank' to send to that site. We are elated to help this community, especially for what they have endured this year with the school shooting tragedy."

Upon hearing the news of the wreath donation, Melissa Federspill contacted a local 4H Club, including teen leaders Koben Sanchez and Hope Smith. They will be placing the donated wreaths for the veterans of Uvalde on Wreaths Across America Day on December 17, 2022. A year ago, the Uvalde Leader-News editorial staff sparked the Wreaths Across America campaign in Uvalde to pay tribute to Uvalde's veterans. The newspaper utilized the help of the 4-H students, who also contributed to the project.

The Wreaths Across America began in 1992 when one American family had the idea to go to Arlington National Cemetery and honor the men and women who served this country with traditional veterans' wreaths.

This was a kind, quiet gesture that continued until 2005 when a reporter released a photo of graves covered in snow with fresh balsam veterans wreaths honoring every stone in

sight. This gesture sparked a movement that became known as Wreaths Across America Day (December 17 this year.) Since that time, thousands of volunteer groups, including the one in Alton, diligently work to honor interred veterans in their community.

For more information, about sponsoring a wreath, visit [www.wreathacrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathacrossamerica.org)

## **About Wreaths Across America**

*Wreaths Across America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman [Morrill Worcester in 1992](#). The organization's mission – [Remember, Honor, Teach](#) – is carried out in part each year by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies in December at Arlington, as well as at thousands of veterans' cemeteries and other [locations in all 50 states](#) and beyond.*