

Long-Time Community Servant: Jack Keller Considered Marshal Role Huge Honor

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Jack Keller has always been one to serve his community and country. This past Memorial Day, he was honored with one of his biggest accomplishments - he was the grand marshal for the historic Alton parade. Jack rated the day as "quite an honor."

"It was very kind of them to do that," he said. "I always loved doing community service type of work and my work with East End Improvement Association," one of the parade sponsors.

East End also is a coordinator of the Alton Halloween Parade and Jack has been involved in both for years upon years.

Jack and his wife, Joan, both rode together in the parade. He describes Joan as "the love of my life." Jack is now 92 years old.

Jack was a 3rd Class Petty Officer during the Korean War and was based in Key West, Fla. Keller spent much of his time aboard a submarine and part of a crew. He said he retained friends from those days for the rest of his life.

Jack returned home to raise his children and now loves not only his children but also his grandchildren.

He operated a service station at 285 Elm St. in 1959 and later opened another at 4101 Alby St. that ultimately became Steve's Service.

He served on Alton's Civil Service Commission for seven years and has been with the East End Improvement Association since the late 1950s.

"I always loved doing work in the community and I love Alton," he said.