



Comedian Shawn Banks to Return to Alton as Emcee at Mayor's Ball

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
September 13 2023 8:01 AM



ALTON - Growing up in Alton, Shawn Banks admits he was a bit of a “class clown.” Now, the actor and stand-up comedian is returning to his hometown to emcee [the upcoming Mayor’s Charity and Fundraiser Ball](#).

“I started off being the funny guy and sort of the class clown growing up in Alton at some of the schools there, from North to middle school to Alton High School,” Banks

said. “It’s an honor to have the opportunity to come back home to my city, Alton, Illinois, which I love so much, and to host the Mayor’s Ball.”

The masquerade ball with a Mardi Gras twist will take place on Saturday, Oct. 7 and raise money for both Mayor David Goins’s campaign and local nonprofit the Overnight Warming Center. A silent auction and two bands will accompany the dinner and dance. The event will also honor community members and [two NFL stars from Alton](#). Anyone who wishes to attend must RSVP by Sept. 16 at the [event’s webpage](#).

Banks will return to Alton as the event’s emcee, though he jokes he might forgo the masquerade mask so he can still make the funny facial expressions that define his comedy. Banks has been featured on America’s Got Talent and Comedy Central, and he is involved in several projects right now. He’s excited to take the stage in Alton for a night.

“In all my years of doing stand-up comedy and acting and things like that, I’ve never really been asked to come back and do something so great,” Banks said. “As the person who’s just going through the process, you’re constantly working to try to get to a level where everybody across the world knows who you are. Coming from a small city like Alton and that whole area there in Madison County and all that, it’s just really good to see people looking up and wanting to aspire.”

Banks added that he is most excited to catch up with the other attendees at the ball, including people he went to school with and older community members who he hasn’t seen in a while. He named Alton Middle School art teacher Angel Weber as someone he is most excited to see, as Weber is his aunt and also a major inspiration to him as a fellow creative.

But while the ball will be a fun night, Banks shared that his visit to Alton will also be difficult for him. He hasn’t been back to his hometown since January, when he laid his mother to rest.

“This is my first time coming back home with not having my mom here in the flesh, but she’s with me in spirit,” he said. “I always, when I come home, of course see Mom, and she’s always proud of everything that I do. I wish that she could be here at this event.”

While it’s a bittersweet return, Banks said he’s still excited to come back and help fundraise for causes he cares about, including the Friends of David Goins organization and the [Overnight Warming Center](#). He also noted his appreciation for how his hometown is cheering him on, and he hopes to serve as an inspiration to other kids in Alton who are pursuing their passions.

“I’m really just proud that I can inspire people from my hometown, and I’m always looking to help anyone that’s trying to break into entertainment or do anything else to be successful in life,” he said. “Shawn Banks is still out there doing it and chasing the dream.”

To keep up with Banks, follow [his social media](#) accounts. For more information about the Mayor’s Ball, including a full itinerary, check out [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](#) or visit the [event page](#) at [GoinsforMayor.com](#).