



VFW Vets Day Speakers Inspire With Their Lives Of Service

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The speakers at the VFW Post 1308 Veterans Day Program, Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, at the Alby Street location each have a legacy of service, and that was felt during their presentations.

Jake Lloyd, a corpsman in the United State Navy, was the keynote speaker. Alton Mayor David Goins read a moving proclamation during the service. The two then handed the baton to Dave Stout, an Air Force veteran and past state commander of the VFW to conclude the event before the 21-Gun Salute and playing of Taps outside.



Some key points made by the trio:

Lloyd was a corpsman in both Iraq and Afghanistan during those wars. Lloyd expressed that he was honored to make a presentation as the keynote speaker at the Vets Day ceremony and “it means a lot everyone takes part in this.”

Lloyd said he grew up as a third-generation Navy brat and emphasized the Marine Corps doesn’t have combat medics, so he took on that role after intense prior training.

He spoke of his swearing-in for the Navy at Busch Stadium and recalled Cardinals’ legend Albert Pujols saying “good luck guys” to him and the others before their departure in 2007.

Initially, Lloyd thought he was headed for service time in Hawaii, but right after he arrived, he was informed his orders had changed and he headed for Iraq.

His first medical emergency there was called in as a woman having a baby, but he said that was not the case, it was something different.

“I got close to those who served in Iraq,” he said of his time there. In November of 2009 after seven months of training, he headed for Afghanistan for a second tour in a war situation.

He was in an infantry unit and he said it was a completely different deployment than Iraq.

“It was very busy with the Marines infantry unit and it was one of the busiest units,” he said. “A lot of life experiences happened in my seven months in Afghanistan.”

Lloyd stressed how proud he was of those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and anyone in general who has served or is presently serving in the military.





Mayor Proud To Be Part Of Important Veterans Ceremony

Alton Mayor Goins said he was so proud to be a part of the ceremony this past Saturday to celebrate those who have served in the military and those who gave their lives in the ultimate sacrifice defending the country.

“I am honored to read the proclamation today,” he said. The proclamation was filled with details of how Veterans Day was founded and read with sincere emotion by the mayor, who served for many years previously as an Alton police officer and minister.



Stout, always a strong speaker, closed the event in style with his remarks.

He thanked every veteran who has served in this country or is still serving.

“Despite some opinions, we built the best country in the world,” he said. “I have been all over the world and today it may not be perfect, but I encourage you to try to live in Saudi Arabia and see how it is or in the Philippines. It is not like it is in this country - they don't have our freedoms. I am so thankful to be a part of the greatest country in the world here and I am thankful to all veterans for their service.”

[See the related story on the Veterans Day event at VFW by clicking here.](#)

