

Alton VFW Post 1308 marks Veterans Day with touching ceremony

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON – Veterans Day is a day to honor those serving and those who have served our country. This day gives patriotic citizens, groups and organizations the opportunity to truly give thanks to our country’s freedom fighters.

Every year, the **Alton Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1308** takes time on Veterans Day to honor the men and women who served in every branch of the military. This year’s event was as touching as ever, with **Michael Holliday Sr. of Alton** serving as guest speaker.

Holliday spoke of his lifetime of service, from his time in the Navy in the early 1960s, to his work with the Olin Westerner Club, roles as precinct committeeman, Madison County Board member and time with a local VFW chapter. He also spoke of his long time of service as an employee at Olin.

“Military roles and the doctrines mold young men and women,” he said. “I wouldn’t trade my time in service for anything. I met a lot of long-lasting friends. Happy Veterans Day and may God bless the United States of America.”

Dave Stout, presently senior vice commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars for Illinois, also announced that later in 2016 he will be taking over the senior commander post, the first for Alton.

“I will be sworn in during the second Saturday of June as senior commander,” Stout said. “It is something I am very proud about.”

Stout reflected on his time in the military and what Veterans Day means to him personally.

“To me, I personally spent so long in the military and made so many friends and I know what the military does on a day-to-day basis in peace time and war time contributions to society,” Stout said. “This is fitting to have a day to remember everyone in the military who served working with bullets to beans. The day-to-day work keeps us ready to deploy at a moment’s notice. This day is very, very special and it makes me think back to all my friends in the military I have lost or lost track of. It is a big fraternity and it doesn’t matter which branch you served in, we all do it as one big team.”

Stout also recognized the 240th birthday of the United States Marine Corps yesterday, Nov. 10.

Susan Parrish of Alton, of the VFW Auxiliary, said today is a day she takes seriously because of her husband, Wendell, and her father, Thomas A. Lyons. Lyons was a P.O. W. during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II.

“This is the greatest honor we can give back to our veterans,” she said. “Our veterans gave the ultimate sacrifice and they fought for our freedom. Without our veterans we would not be able to work where we want, dress what we want and exhibit our various



freedoms.”

Several different reps from the various military branches participated in a laying of the wreaths ceremony at the Doughboy Statue in front of the VFW post in Alton. A presentation of arms was then given, followed by Alfred Valdes playing taps. The Doughboy Statue in Alton was first in another location on Broadway after World War I, but later moved to the VFW site on Alby. Dougboy was a popular name for a World War I foot soldier.

Alton Mayor **Brant Walker** said he was honored to be there to read a proclamation to veterans from the City of Alton.

“We have a lot to be thankful for and it would not be possible without everyone who served in the military,” he said.

Walker then looked at all the veterans in attendance and said: For those of you who have served in the military, thank you all for your service."

See below for photo gallery on VFW Veterans Day event:



