

## Every veteran remembered at Huntley's Wreath Across America Day



Glen Smolinski, center, Huntley American Legion, welcomes the crowd at Huntley's second annual Wreaths Across America program Dec. 18 at Huntley and St. Mary Parish cemeteries. Also pictured are: Monique Mahon, left, Huntley Rotary Club; and right, JR Westberg, a veteran and Huntley Village Trustee.  
( *Courtesy of Karen Hutchings* )

During a Dec. 18 ceremony, 334 wreaths were presented to honor veterans at Huntley Cemetery and St. Mary Parish Cemetery by the Village of Huntley, Huntley American Legion Post 673, and Rotary Club of Huntley.

More than 3,000 cemeteries across the U.S. participated in National Wreaths Across America Day.

Many community members, guided by block captains, volunteered to carry wreaths to each site where they fluffed the bows and fresh boughs, carefully laid the wreaths and proudly announced the veteran's full name, branch of service, and rank, along with thank-you wishes and often a prayer.

"Remember, Honor, Teach" is the Wreaths Across America educational mission.

The local American Legion and Rotary Club also arranged for wreath delivery to Union, Riley and Harmony cemeteries.

Local Boy Scouts assisted along with many enthusiastic relatives of veterans and people who simply wanted to show thanks and honor to veterans who helped keep us free.

The ceremony began with a color guard entry, the Pledge of Allegiance, and an invocation by the Rev. Steve Welker of First Congregational Church of Huntley. Commander Don Smolinski of the American Legion welcomed the community.

JR Westberg, veteran and village trustee, acknowledged the military memorial wreaths and Monique Mahon, president of Rotary Club of Huntley, provided instructions for laying the wreaths.

The village was represented by Village Clerk Rita McMahan and program coordinator Barb Read. Father Christopher DiTomo, pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church, provided the benediction.

Special thanks were given for the many people who donated funds for the wreaths.

Join the campaign next year and remember to thank a veteran for his service. You may donate for next year at the American Legion Post 673 in Huntley, or [www.HuntleyRotary.org](http://www.HuntleyRotary.org)

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Glen Smolinski of the American Legion welcomed the crowd. Monique Mahon, president of Rotary Club of Huntley, gave wreath-laying instructions.

McMahon thanked those attending at Huntley's second annual participation in the nationwide Wreaths Across America program on Dec. 18 at Huntley and St. Mary Parish cemeteries.

The color guard presentation was hosted by American Legion Post 673.

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