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NEWSLETTER / NEWS RELEASE
From the Office of the Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 25, 2023

**THE WALK-THROUGH HISTORY PROGRAM UNVEILS ITS 57th
PLAQUE IN HONOR OF THE LATE DR. RANCE THOMAS**

An overwhelming crowd of friends along with many dignitaries gathered in front of 401 rue St. Francois on Wednesday, May 24th to unveil the 57th Walk Through History plaque in honor of the late Dr. Rance Thomas. The plaque dedication took place before the start of the first Wednesday Night Out event that was hosted by the VFW Post 4105.

Dr. Rance Thomas was a 20-year veteran of the United States Air Force and served during the Vietnam conflict. He was also a columnist, professor, author, visionary and community leader for social justice.

Dr. Thomas is a graduate of the University of Nebraska, Southern Illinois University and Saint Louis University, where he received his PhD.

Following his military service, Dr. Thomas became a faculty member at Lewis & Clark Community College, where he retired in 2002 as the first Professor Emeritus in the college's history. He also served as adjunct faculty at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. During his time as a college professor, Dr. Thomas became a regular columnist for numerous publications that included; St Louis Post-Dispatch, North St. Louis County Suburban Journal, The Alton Telegraph and the Community News. Shortly before his death, he published his book, "My Journey, A Testimony of Faith, Hope and Success."

Dr. Thomas' vision and selfless devotion to his community led him to cofound North County Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony and Justice in 1998 which consists of 20+ churches of various denominations in North St. Louis County. He served as its President since its inception. He was President of the Elijah P. Lovejoy Memorial, President of the Florissant Rotary Club and President of the Lewis and Clark Community College's Annuitant Association.

He also served as Vice President of North County Incorporated and was Chair of its Task Force on Health Care for four years. He served as Vice President of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Alton, Vice President of All God's People of Metropolitan St. Louis for three years, and served as a Board Member of the Applied Scholastic International. He also organized the North St. Louis County Youth Task Force and served honorably as its Chairman.

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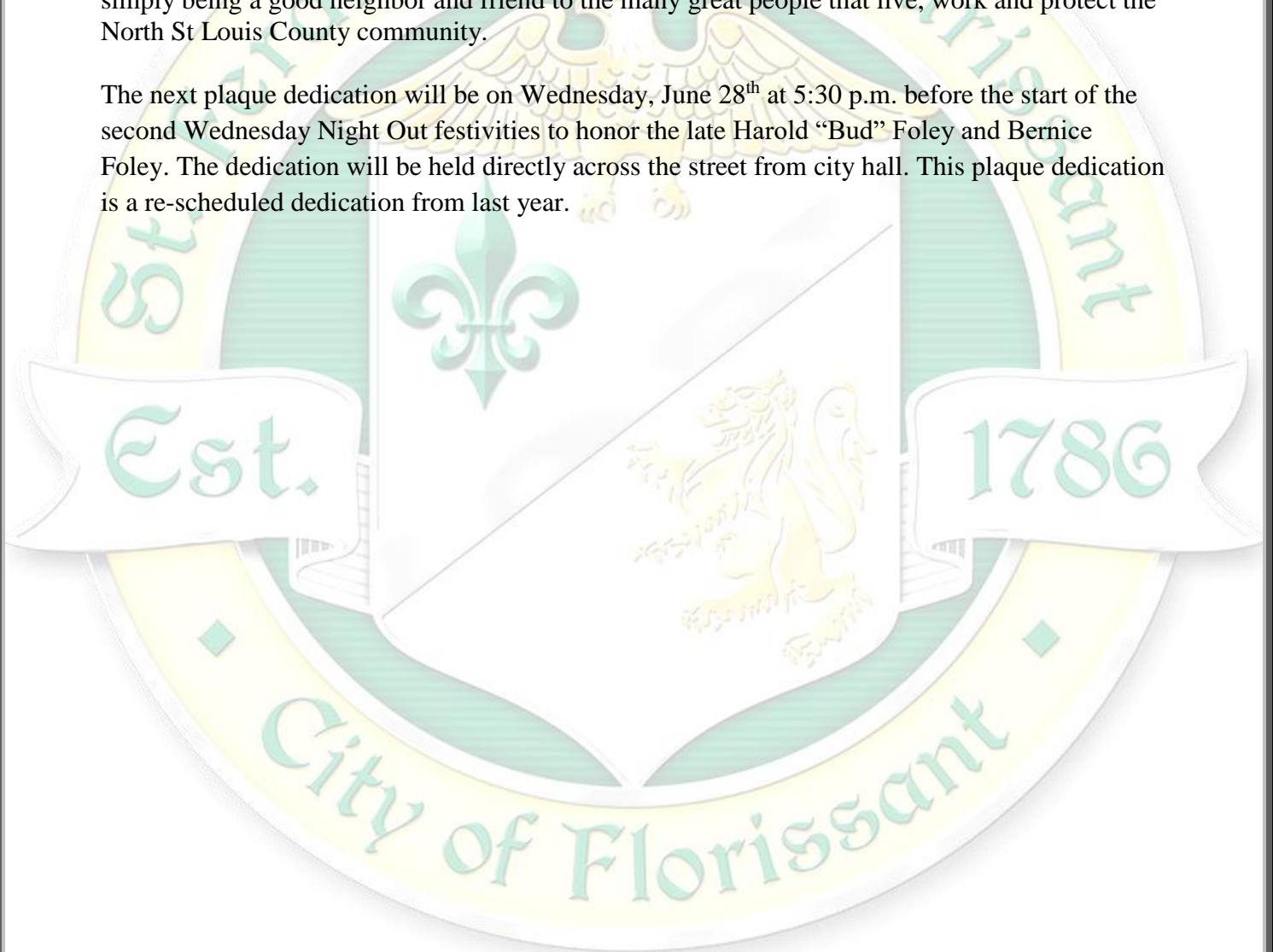
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Dr. Thomas also received numerous awards in his lifetime which include being inducted into the Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Hall of Fame, the Who's Who in the Midwest, the Illinois Education Association's Human and Civil Rights Award, Citizen of the Year Award for Contributions in improving the quality of life in North County, Lifetime Achievement Award from the Hazelwood School District, was inducted into the International Educator's Hall of Fame and was awarded the Dr. Rance Thomas Community Partnership Award, created in his honor, by St Louis Community College, Florissant Valley. He was also a long-time member of the Religious Relations Committee of the Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, a District Committee member of the North Star District and a recipient of the Silver Beaver Award which is the highest award a local council can give to a volunteer.

However, his greatest award and achievement, that he would have told anyone that asked, was simply being a good neighbor and friend to the many great people that live, work and protect the North St Louis County community.

The next plaque dedication will be on Wednesday, June 28th at 5:30 p.m. before the start of the second Wednesday Night Out festivities to honor the late Harold "Bud" Foley and Bernice Foley. The dedication will be held directly across the street from city hall. This plaque dedication is a re-scheduled dedication from last year.



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