

June 26th, 2023, Dedication of the Robert Allen McAllister Park.

Good afternoon, I am Jack McAllister, brother of Bob McAllister. I currently live in Germantown, TN and grew up in Tinley Park on our family farm. I am here today with my wife Mary Jane, my brother Ray and his wife Carol, my sister Dottie and her husband Dave, my brother Dan, and his wife Nancy. Our youngest brother Jim passed away in 2010.

First, I want to thank The Village of Tinley Park, Tinley Park-Park District, US Marine League, American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars as well as visitors today for being here for this dedication to honor my brother Bob McAllister.

My parents Ray and Dorothy McAllister raised six children, five boys and one girl on a small 40-acre farm at 175th and 94th Ave on the outskirts of Tinley Park. My brother Bob was the second oldest.

The oldest was Ray and he was born on July 18, 1946, 2 years later Bob was born July 16, 1948, 2 years later I was born also on July 18th, 1950. When it came time to celebrate birthdays, we told my mom that we had to have our own cakes so Mom, as you would expect baked three cakes. My sister Dottie was born 18 months later in December 1951 and then it was another six years Feb 1957 before Dan was born. Lastly our youngest brother Jim was born April 1960.

Our Dad's parents also lived on the farm with us. To support our family my dad worked in road construction. On the farm we raised 1,000 turkeys a year. We would get them around May 15th as day old chicks and we would butcher them in November and December and sell them. About 200 of those would go to the annual Bingo fund raiser at St George Catholic Church here in Tinley Park. We also raised 25 head of beef steers which we would butcher and sell in January and February each year.

We worked hard on the farm, but it was a happy time, and I can remember many family get togethers.

During the Vietnam War my oldest brother Ray was drafted into the Army. Bob decided that he did not want to go on to college and so he joined the Marines when he was just out of high school. I went on to college, my mom did not want another son in the service, so I did not go into the Military.

My dad retired in 1986 and with the growth of Tinley Park to the west he sold our 40-acre farm to a developer. He built his retirement house on the lot across from this park. Living on the farm and used to open spaces he did not want to see anyone build a house across the street from his house, especially with the six big oak trees that this lot has, so he bought this lot from the cemetery.

When Dad and mom passed, we as a family decided to donate this lot in memory of our brother Bob and to honor our parent's memory. We hope that this park is an inspiration to all who have served our country and to the memory of my brother Bob who gave his life so we could have a place like this to enjoy the freedom that we have.