Edwardsville’s Hops & Heroes Blends Craft Beer and a Cause for Veterans

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - An upcoming event invites community members to enjoy local breweries while supporting honor flights for veterans.

Hops & Heroes will take place at the Edwardsville Moose Lodge from 12–4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 1, 2026. With over 20 breweries represented and five bands on the schedule throughout the day, the event promises to be a ton of fun. All proceeds go toward honor flights for St. Louis area veterans through the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight organization.

“They’re changing lives. They really are,” said Jim. “It really seems to be helping a lot of .”

Jim works with the Edwardsville Moose and Kelly is part of the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight organization. They noted that this event makes it possible for local veterans to visit war memorials in Washington, D.C.

The honor flights start at 3 a.m., when veterans of World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars load into the plane in St. Louis and fly to D.C. They then spend the day visiting memorials built in their honor. They return to St. Louis late that same evening, and the airport is usually filled with people who are cheering to welcome them home.

A recent honor flight helped one veteran celebrate his 104th birthday. This man will be at the event on Aug. 1.

Jim and Kelly agree it’s a worthy cause and a great way to thank veterans for their service. They have seen firsthand how it helps bring healing to the veterans who experience these flights. They hope many people come out and donate toward their work.

As part of the Hops & Heroes event, attendees pay $50 and receive a token glass. You can then try all the beer you want throughout the day. There will be over 20 breweries and microbreweries from St. Louis and the Riverbend represented at the event.

There are also designated driver options available, and the Moose Lodge will help people call Ubers when they are ready to leave if needed.

There will be barbecue available for purchase starting at 11:30 a.m. that morning. Live music will be provided throughout the day by Blackwater Acoustics, The Harpers, H Sammy Solo, The Vibe, and Everhart and Light.

There will also be a 50/50 drawing, a silent auction, t-shirts for sale and more fun. You must purchase tickets online to attend. You can also donate online.

Jim added that the Edwardsville Moose Lodge has raised over $175,000 for the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight organization through this event over the past eight years. Kelly and Jim emphasized that while the event will be a lot of fun, they hope no one loses sight of the meaning behind what they're doing.

"It's unbelievable for veterans who have served. You come back, and the amount of people who are just cheering for you and acknowledging what you've done ," Kelly said. "Come on out. It's going to be a great time. I am extremely excited."

Jim noted that the Edwardsville Moose hosts regular chicken dinner fundraisers to help other organizations. You can reach out to the Edwardsville Moose Lodge if you would like to learn more about this.

Any money the Moose makes goes back to their initiatives for children in the foster care system and seniors. The Moose offers housing and education to kids in the foster care system through their Mooseheart compound near Chicago. They also run Moosehaven in Florida for seniors in need of assisted living or nursing home care. Operating these two facilities is at the heart of the Moose fraternity's mission.

"A lot of people don't know that about the Moose. They think the Moose is just a place to drink and hang out. But that's what we do. In Edwardsville, we support 30 local charities that are in the Riverbend area. Every month, we have a charity that we pick out and raise money for. We will pick a family," Jim added. "We know how to raise money. We know how to help people. And this is all part of it."

For more information about the Edwardsville Moose Lodge and how to get involved, visit their official Facebook page. To learn more about the Greater St. Louis Honor

Flight organization, how to donate, or how to nominate a veteran for a flight, visit their official website. Check out the official Facebook event page or the official website for more information about Hops & Heroes, including how to purchase tickets.