



# Hops for Heroes event is a success in raising Honor Flight program funds

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** - Beer makers from as far away as Montana and as close as just down the street came to the **Edwardsville KC Hall** Sunday to help send World War II veterans to Washington, D.C.

Event organizer **Scott Bayles** said he wanted to do something for veterans, especially local ones. He had attended several craft beer festivals in the past, and believed hosting one for a good cause would be especially beneficial. Seventeen breweries attended the event, each with their own special selections on hand. Pulled pork sandwiches and other lunchtime favorites were served by the KC Hall near the bandstand.

"I'm used to being on the other side of the table at these," Bayles said. "I wanted to do something for our veterans, especially Edwardsville ones. The money raised here today will send two veterans from the **Edwardsville/Glen Carbon** area to Washington, D.C. this coming April."

Those veterans will be sent through the **Land of Lincoln Honor Flight** program. That chapter is one of more than 100 across the country. It is based from **Springfield**. World War II veterans are flown for free to enjoy a day of sightseeing in Washington, D.C., including a trip to the much-delayed World War II Memorial.

**John Dust**, of the Land of Lincoln Honor Flight, helped Bayles with the event. He said the **Honor Flight** program was created because 75 percent of World War II veterans had died by the time their memorial was constructed in 2004.

"Most of them were in their late 70s and 80s, and now they're in their late 80s and 90s, and most of them would never get to see ," Dust said of the veterans in Honor Flight.

More than 170,000 veterans have been flown on Honor Flights nationally, with more than 3,000 being flown from **Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport** in Springfield. The Land of Lincoln Honor Flight chapter charts a Boeing 737 specifically for the veterans and their guardians. Guardians are often chosen by veterans, and can be anyone except their spouses. Dust said children, relatives and friends of veterans usually accompany them.

In cases where a veteran does not have such a guardian, or space and time does not allow them to attend, everyday people can volunteer to fit that role. Applications to be a guardian were at the Hops for Heroes event and can be downloaded from [www.LandofLincolnHonorFlight.org](http://www.LandofLincolnHonorFlight.org). Dust said veterans are paired with guardians from their area.

Dust said **Hops for Heroes** was the first beer festival for their honor, but said donations come from everywhere from a small child giving them \$5 to military organizations and

church groups donating larger amounts. The cost of sending each veteran is between \$400-\$500. The Land of Lincoln Honor Flight is a 501(c)3 charity.

The beers featured at the event included **Big Sky Brewery** from all the way in Montana and **Recess Brewery**, located at 307 N. Main St. in Edwardsville. Alton's **Old Bakery Beer Company** and Belleville-based **4204 Brewery** were also in attendance.





