



Best Western Premier Alton Assists Warrior Paddle Program By Hosting Four Veterans

by Riverbender Staff

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For the past 6 years, Best Western Premier Alton has partnered with a company called Warrior Expedition, offering hotel night stays for their Warrior Paddle Program, a non-profit outdoor therapy program that supports veterans transitioning from their military service by paddling all 2,320 miles of the Mississippi River.

Warrior Expeditions provides veterans with everything required to complete a long-distance outdoor expedition at no cost to the veteran.

Four veteran paddlers, William Christopher, Brian Dales, Eric Endries, and Harry Gardner will arrive in Alton via Alton Marina on Monday or Tuesday next week.



Name: William Christopher

Hometown: Leavenworth, KS

Branch: United States Army

MOS: Field Artillery

Service: 1990-2016

Deployments: Iraq, Afghanistan



Name: Brian Dales

Hometown: Summerville, SC

Branch: United States Air Force

MOS: Physical Medicine

Service: 1992-2013

Deployments: Iraq



Name: Eric Endries

Hometown: Edenton, NC

Branch: United States Army

MOS: Armor Officer

Service: 1990-2011

Deployments: Somalia, Iraq



Name: Harry Gardner

Hometown: Pooler, GA

Branch: United States Marine Corps

MOS: Adjutant

Service: 1987-2018

Deployments: Saudi Arabia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan

Jacinda Dunlap of Best West Premier is very passionate about this program. Dunlap is working to organize a meet-and-greet with the veterans early next week, but details are still in the works. Dunlap has also made contact with the Alton VFW to invite the auxiliary and members to come out to welcome the paddlers. By hosting, Best Western Premier Alton is providing much-needed rest from a long journey, in addition to helping the veterans to reintegrate into society by establishing meaningful relationships between them and Alton's veterans and citizens.

More information to come. You can follow the paddlers' journey on Facebook

[@Facebook.com/warriorhike.](https://www.facebook.com/warriorhike)

