

Edwardsville Fire and Police Departments Compete in "Battle of the Badges" Blood Drive

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Fire and Police Departments once again competed in a "Battle of the Badges" blood drive to encourage blood donations and interdepartmental relationships.

From 12:30–5:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 3, 2023, community members could donate blood at the Edwardsville Public Safety Building. When people signed in for their appointments, they were asked to note whether they were on the side of the Fire Department or the Police Department. Assistant Fire Chief Robert Morgan explained the winning department would get the best prize of all: bragging rights.

“We obviously respond to a lot of accidents and incidents, especially on the paramedic side. A lot of people that we deal with are going to need blood, and we know there’s always a shortage,” Morgan said. “So it’s just something that would be good for not just our community, but the greater community at large.”

Battle of the Badges has been an Edwardsville tradition for over ten years, and they usually get upwards of 40 donors. The blood drive started as “a little competition” between the departments, who try to recruit people to donate on either side. Morgan couldn’t predict the 2023 victor, as he said the winner usually “flip flops” from year to year.

While it’s a fun day for the departments, Morgan noted that the competition ultimately serves as “another motivation” to give blood. They try to get as many donors in the door as possible to provide a boost to the local blood banks.

The Police and Fire Departments have noticed another positive side to the blood drive: It strengthens their relationship. The departments often work together on the scene of accidents or other emergencies, but police officers and firefighters in other communities don’t always get along.

Luckily, Morgan said, this is a nonissue in Edwardsville. The departments regularly collaborate and have fun through friendly competitions like Battle of the Badges.

“We’ve got a really good working relationship, police and fire. That’s not always the case, believe it or not,” Morgan said. “But in this community, we work really well together. And you know, if we can get one up on each other in a friendly way that also helps, so be it. You got to have those bragging rights.”