

# Country music artist Matt Taul, street crew and civic donation make parade of flags a reality

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**EDWARDSVILLE** - It was a damp, windy night Wednesday in Downtown Edwardsville, but standing tall were men, women and children who marched in the annual **Veterans Day Parade**. Also flying above the downtown streets of the city were **100 American flags**, donated by the Daughters of American Revolution.

The flags were priceless for those in attendance at the parade and have been a centerpiece of conversation within Edwardsville over the past week. The civic group didn't stop with the flags, but they decided to assist **Edwardsville Street Department Supervisor Matt Taul and his staff** with a project to put flag holders on each pole for the flags. Now during every special occasion, Memorial Day, Flag Day, the Fourth of July, Veterans Day, the flags can be positioned in the holders and removed once the event has concluded.

Recently, the **City of Edwardsville** realized the flags would be donated by the giving charitable organization. The problem was the poles throughout downtown did not have a holder that could accommodate the flags. There was research done and the costs of such holders and time to get them were enormous, yet Street Department Supervisor Taul and his group came to the rescue.

"The group wanted to purchase 100 flags and wanted to know if we could put them up in downtown and Mr. (**Hal**) **Patton**, our mayor, is very supportive of the Armed Services and wanted to find a way to do it," Taul said. "I took the bull by the horns and came up with a prototype for an attractive holder. We experimented with a different design and we got the parts we needed and started making them, almost in an assembly

line type of process. I have to give credit to our people in the street department. They worked really hard making this happen and put their muscle into it.”

**Edwardsville Mayor Hal Patton** couldn’t say enough about Taul, the Edwardsville Street Department and the DAR for putting in such a herculean effort to enable the flags to be hung before Veterans Day and now available every holiday thereafter.

“There wasn’t a band or connecting device and Matt Taul and his group took it upon themselves to use a pipe bender and create a sample for us to see that was a flag holder that could stay in place so the flags could be taken down at different times,” Patton said. “Veterans Day is an important day for all of us to enjoy our freedom and salute our veterans. This and our annual parade show how important they are to all of us. Matt and his group even painted the pipes and had all these positioned within four days. I am so impressed by what they did. This is an example of how our employees make things happen and would do anything for veterans.”

Taul is well known around the area for being a musician. He regularly performs throughout the region with his country/blue grass, Americana style music, and was a founding member of the popular band “Stubblefield.”

“Hal and I had a conversation and we both felt the importance of the project,” Taul said. “Having the flags flying in the city is something so meaningful for the veterans on special days. You can never give enough back to those folks who go out and defend you and your rights. It was an absolute joy for me to do it.”

As the final flag was positioned, Taul and his crew said it was an “awesome” feeling on what had been accomplished.

“I don’t see another town that has done that to that type of scale,” Taul said. “It makes you feel very proud of the people who sacrificed so much to allow me to go to work every day in a **free country**.”