

Second Annual Run to the Ohio Wall – Attendee Stories

I was invited to ride in the second annual Run to the Ohio Wall, which I accepted without hesitation. Arriving early, I noticed the vendors were set up, and after looking around I decided to register. Because I am disabled, I received a ribbon allowing me to park close to the memorial wall and the main tent at Clay's Park.

The one o'clock ride started with a prayer. Then, the Lawrence Township Police led us out of the park, followed mostly by Vietnam veteran bikers. I'm left over from the '60s, so Vietnam vets hold a special place in my heart. I arrived at Memorial Park and showed my ribbon which allowed me to park close to the wall. All others had to park half a mile away and had to walk in ninety-degree temperature. These people are sixty-five-years old, suffering from Agent Orange-caused diseases. How many times must we make them suffer? For me, walking is painful; fortunately, a kind vendor lent me her chair.

While sitting there, I watched proud veterans, wearing vests covered with American flags and service patches, weep while others held on to their loved ones. The service started with a prayer for all those who sacrificed in all wars so this country could be what it is today. It was a very moving and emotional moment. Speeches were made, "God Bless America" was sung, there was a prayer everyone participated in, and the service was finished with a twenty-one gun salute by the Strongsville V.F.W. honor guard.

Upon completion, we rode back to Clay's Park where there was live music, beverages, food, a caricature artist, and vets. I met many veterans and listened and learned first-hand about the veteran's administration and voo-doo math - which I found very unusual. By now, you may think that I am a Vietnam veteran, but you would be wrong. I never served in our military; I am just a proud American who recognizes, honors, and respects every one of our brave military personnel. God bless them all.

Stow, Ohio
Bob Thorsson

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I served in Vietnam from June of '67 to June of '68. There is no stronger bond, no greater brotherhood, between anyone than that of combat Vets. Under fire, you never think of yourself or even of your family, your only concern is the welfare of your comrades and theirs is only of yours. The bond just becomes stronger and you love them all.

I ride with the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association whose motto is "Vets Helping Vets". I personally believe in thanking everyone I can and giving what I can whenever I can.

I was honored to be a part of both the first and second annual runs to the Ohio Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. I rode to honor those who have given all and to show my support for those who still serve.

The Vietnam Veterans have a mission statement, "Never again will one generation of Veterans abandon the next". Ask any service person today who their biggest supporters are and they will tell you the Vietnam Veterans who live their motto "never to be forgotten".

I knew seven of the men whose names are the Ohio Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall personally. My sister dated two of them. I would have been proud to have served with any of them. They were all great men.

It was a great honor for me to ride to the Wall with so many patriotic supporters.

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