

Ride of Pride

On July 24, 2010, it was my honor to again lead Veterans and Patriots who support our Troops and our Veterans on the 2ND Annual Run To The Ohio Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Clinton Ohio. This years Run was dedicated to our Fallen, Deployed and Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. I rode with Smitty-Operation Iraqi Freedom, B-Rock-Desert Storm, B-Rocks father Pops-Vietnam, Sok, L.T., Wick and all the Combat Veteran Motorcycle Ass. members. Two great ladies, Colleen and Mickey who support our Troops and Bobby-T who rode his Super-glide after 9 back surgeries. Bobby can't stand straight and needs a cane to walk even a few feet. My 2 best friends Walter and Paulie, both Nam Vets, who I would be lost without. And of course Chell Rossi who worked tirelessly every single day for the Run and for our Veterans. It was truly my Honor to even ride with these American Patriots let alone lead them.



Photo courtesy of Cliff Franks <http://www.clifffranks.com/>

I was given one of the shell casings from the 21 gun salute by the Strongsville VFW Honor Guard and it sits in a place of honor in my house. At the candle-lite vigil when the Gold and Blue Star Mothers read the names of the 216 Ohioans who have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan tears soaked my shirt but I stood there proudly unashamed. Our latest generation of soldiers are surely our Greatest and Bravest.

The young band, The Brighter Side, whose average age was 15, played all the songs from Vietnam. As Wick said they played songs older then themselves and they rocked our socks off. They played for free out of respect for our Veterans. They and others like them will anchor our next generation of American soldiers.

I also had the pleasure of working with the greatest group of Americans ever, The Run To The Ohio Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall Committee. The only way I can think of to truly thank all who came and all those who worked so hard to make the 2ND Annual Run To The Ohio Wall a success is to start planning the 3rd Annual Run. From the bottom of my heart Thank You all.

By: Run President Sp-4 Luke P. Patrino 937Th Combat Engineer Group Republic of Vietnam 67-68