

A Night to Remember (August 10, 2023)

### Our First Fundraising Dinner

We had it all: A fantastic venue (donated by Curt and Liz Wyandt) with a glorious view of the surrounding hills, the perfect speaker for a Veterans related event (American hero, Rocky Bleir), patriotic and upbeat background music (by singer Danner Conner and DJ Jan Jursa), dozens of veterans and their families among the sold-out crowd of 300, a delicious buffet (by Joey Del), and first-class drinks from Forbes Trail Brewery and Rusty Musket Distillery.

It was a night to remember because of the special buzz in the converted barn of the Friesland Event Center in Hooversville, PA. A sense of patriotism was in the air all night long – from the Pledge of Allegiance led by Meyersdale High School student Laurel Daniels to Danny Conner’s singing of God Bless America, and reached a crescendo in the highly entertaining and moving keynote address by an authentic American hero.

Rocky Bleier, a superstar in high school and college (Notre Dame), was then drafted by the Steelers. Not long after, he was drafted once again by Uncle Sam. After being badly wounded in Vietnam, he refused to believe medical opinions that he would never play football again. Not only did he play again, but standing in that barn in Hooversville, he showed us all the four Super Bowl rings he brought along. His story, his charisma, his patriotism and his presence were greatly appreciated by all of us in attendance and evidenced by multiple standing ovations for this great American.

It was a wonderful night. But there is another reason it was a night to remember, a more important reason. Behind it all we were there to remember those who sacrificed so much in the wars that followed the attacks of 9/11, and in doing so to help raise money to support the mission of Patriot Park.

So “the night to remember” was really the official kick-off event for this year’s fundraising activities. We know that once people find out more about Patriot Park, fundraising will not be difficult. But because we are not so well-known yet, fundraising remains a challenge.

Just like Rocky Bleier would not give up despite the odds against him, we will not give up or let up in taking Patriot Park to the next level. We know that as more Americans learn about the Park, they will generously support it. Because most Americans still love and respect their military and are smart enough to know that it wasn’t the politicians or corporate executives who put their lives on the line time and time again since 9/11. It was the U.S. military.

We cannot ever forget the sacrifices of these American heroes and their families.

As one veteran of the Iraq War wrote in our visitors log at Patriot Park: “We want to live for those who we could not bring home with us.” Another wrote: “As a wounded combat veteran, this warms my heart.”

These are just a couple of examples of the tremendous feedback we get from visitors. These comments validate that we are on the right track “to remember,” and with your generous support we know that even greater things are in the future.

Our first fundraiser was indeed “a night to remember.” With your help, with us working together, each day at Patriot Park will be “a day to remember” for all of our visitors.

**AUGUST 10TH**

**SPECIAL FUNDRAISING**  
*Dinner*

FEATURING GUEST  
SPEAKER  
**ROCKY BLEIER**

**TICKETS AVAILABLE  
NOW**

[PATRIOTPARKFOUNDATION.ORG](http://PATRIOTPARKFOUNDATION.ORG)

