



## LATEST NEWS



Dear Friends of Veterans Village,

I trust this message finds everyone well as we endured the weather mother nature threw our way in February. Many bitterly cold days. February also brought us the most snow fall so far this year. This is weather that makes us proud to be Wisconsinites.

As always, thank you to everyone who has and continues to make a meaningful impact on the lives of veterans living at the village and here in Wisconsin. We are proud to have such a wonderful facility to provide a safe, supportive environment for those who have served our country.

Much has been accomplished in February.

The four recently renovated apartments are now complete. This means all 48 apartments are now housing veterans.

Plans for this year's golf outing are well underway. The date is June 5<sup>th</sup>. Once again it will be held at Royal St. Patrick's Golf Links in Wrightstown. Please use the link <https://wisvva.org/golf-outing/> to join in the fun at the Golf Outing, and register for a foursome, or Sponsor a Hole. Page 2 features an article on Rocky. His Spirt, Drive, and determination are an inspiration to us here at the Wisconsin Veterans Village, and the Veteran Community. Please consider joining us on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

We are also starting to plan this year's Tasting for the Troops event. Plans are to hold the event on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. More news to follow.

The board approved a new fund-raising campaign we are calling "A Buck A Day". WisVVA is looking to raise \$1.8 million so we can retire the existing debt on the village. We'll be asking those interested, to donate \$1.00/day or \$365.00/year for five (5) years. All proceeds from the campaign will be used to retire the debt on the village. When successful, WisVVA will be that much stronger in its ability to impact the lives of existing and future veterans with their housing needs.

The board also approved attending the Downtown Appleton Farmers Market this summer, to support Guitars for Vets, and highlight WisVVA's mission in providing housing for veterans. Look for more details. The Farmers Market will be held every Saturday from 8:30am – 12:30pm from Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>

Thank you again for everyone's support. We look forward to making further impacts in the lives of veterans and continued support through donations, big and small. They all play a critical role in the mission to serve those who served.

Respectfully

Keith Scott,  
President, WisVVA

#### Vet Crisis Line

**Dial 988 then press 1**

*You don't need to be enrolled in VA it's or health care to connect.*

#### Veterans Benefits

**County Veterans Service Officers 920-832-5698**

*CVSO assists with applying for benefits (federal or state) that you may be interested in and eligible for.*

#### Fox Valley Veterans Council 920-358-0662

*Assist, connect and honor military veteran families in our community.*



June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
 ROYAL ST. PATRICKS  
 GOLF LINKS  
 201 ROYAL SAINT PATS DR.  
 WRIGHTSTOWN



## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Rocky Bleier Golf Classic

Born and raised in Appleton, Wisconsin, Bleier was the oldest of four children of Bob and Ellen Bleier, who ran Bleier's Bar, while the family of six lived above it. He had a paper route as a youth, and graduated from Xavier High School in 1964, where he starred in football and basketball.

Bleier played college football at the University of Notre Dame, and graduated in 1968 with a degree in business management. During his junior season in 1966, the Fighting Irish won the national championship and he was a team captain as a senior in 1967. He was selected in the 16th round of the 1968 NFL/AFL Draft by the Pittsburgh Steelers, 417th overall.

### **Military Service – Vietnam**

After his rookie season with the Steelers, Bleier was drafted into the U.S. Army on December 4, 1968, during the Vietnam War. He shipped out for Vietnam in May 1969 assigned to Company C, 4th Battalion (Light), 31st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade and assigned as a squad grenadier operating a 40mm M79 grenade launcher. On August 20, while on patrol in Hiep Duc, Bleier was wounded in the left thigh by an enemy rifle bullet when his platoon was ambushed in a rice paddy. While he was down, an enemy grenade landed nearby after bouncing off a fellow soldier, he tried to leap over it and it exploded sending shrapnel into his lower right leg. His right foot was severely damaged in the blast as well. He was later awarded the Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge and Purple Heart. His rank was Specialist 4.

While he was recovering in a hospital in Tokyo, doctors told him that he could not play football again. Soon after, he received a postcard from Steelers owner Art Rooney which simply read "Rock – the team's not doing well. We need you. Art Rooney". Bleier later said, "When you have somebody take the time and interest to send you a postcard, something that they didn't have to do, you have a special place for those kinds of people". After several surgeries, he was discharged from the Army in July 1970, and began informal workouts with Steeler teammates.

Bleier's military service is commemorated in the Pentagon's Wounded Warrior corridor.

### **NFL career**

Bleier rejoined the Steelers in camp in 1970. He was put on injured reserve for the season, but returned in 1971 and made the taxi squad. But Bleier never gave up. In 1972 he made the team primarily playing on special teams and said "that he worked hard, so that sometime in the future you didn't have to ask yourself 'what if?'". An offseason training regimen brought Bleier back to 212 lb. (96 kg) in the summer of 1973, and he ultimately earned a spot in the Steelers' starting lineup.

In addition to being a great lead blocker, Bleier was the second of the Steelers' rushing weapons (Franco Harris was the primary back), but was effective nonetheless at both blocking and rushing. In 1976, both Harris and Bleier rushed for over 1,000 yards, making them the second NFL tandem to accomplish this feat in the history of the NFL.

Bleier played in the first four Steeler Super Bowl victories, and caught the touchdown pass from Terry Bradshaw that gave Pittsburgh a lead it would never relinquish in Super Bowl XIII. He also recovered Dallas's onside kick in the closing seconds, sealing the Steelers' victory.

Bleier retired after the 1980 season, with 3,865 rushing yards, 136 receptions for 1,294 yards, and 25 touchdowns. At the time of his retirement, he was the Steelers' fourth all-time leading rusher.

### **Off the field**

Bleier wrote a book of his struggle to recover from his war wounds called *Fighting Back: The Rocky Bleier Story*, and it was made into a television movie in 1980, with Robert Urich starring as Bleier, Art Carney as team owner Art Rooney, and many of Bleier's teammates as themselves. Bleier is featured in the 2014 feature documentary "Project 22", which chronicles the cross-country motorcycle journey of two young veterans exploring alternative treatments for PTSD and TBI.

In 2019 Bleier went back to Vietnam after fifty years with ESPN to record the documentary entitled "The Return". An emotional trip back in time. Bleier has four children and 7 grandchildren. He and his wife Jan reside in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE VILLAGE



## SUPPORTING VETERANS VILLAGE

Please visit our website at [www.wisvva.org](http://www.wisvva.org).  
 Follow us on Facebook at: [Facebook/WisVVA](https://www.facebook.com/WisVVA).  
 Follow us on Instagram: [#Wisvva](https://www.instagram.com/Wisvva)

The Village, Guitars for Vets, Music for Success are all partnering together this Spring and Summer, to promote one another, through music and PSA's (Public Service Announcements) to bring awareness to each of our causes. If interested in volunteering, please contact us at [Norbert.bolda@wisvva.org](mailto:Norbert.bolda@wisvva.org)

## RECENT DONATIONS TO THE VILLAGE

As of December 2024, Veterans village set up a "Wish List" on Amazon. The Wish List shows current needs for the community, or for individual veterans. When an item is selected, it is drop shipped directly to Veterans Village. A card accompanies the donation, so that we know who sent the donation.

Veterans' Village recognizes these donations on our Facebook page. Please follow us there.

A link to the Amazon Wish List can be found on our Facebook page. [Facebook/WisVVA.org](https://www.facebook.com/WisVVA.org)

*Thank you for thinking of the Veterans Village Community.*

## DID YOU KNOW...

### Welcome to our new tenants:

- Jordan - US Army      Building 300
- Devan - US Army      Building 300

### Resident Birthdays this month:

**Keith**  
**Peyton**

Happy Birthday to Everyone! Have a special Day!

### The Village is looking for volunteers to help with the following upcoming calendar of events.

- Purpose of these events is to gain visibility in the community, and to help with our fundraising efforts.
- Arbor Day (April 25<sup>th</sup>)
- Memorial Day – Building a Parade Float (May 26<sup>th</sup>)
- Flag Day – Use the same Float (June 14<sup>th</sup>)
- Rocky Bleier Golf Tournament – Volunteers needed (June 5<sup>th</sup>)
- Farmers Market Appleton – June through October to man a booth talk up the village.
- Farmers Market Green Bay – June through October, to man a booth and talk up the Village.
- Fourth of July Parade Floats
- Taste for the Troops - TBA

We need as many people to join, and help. Transportation should not be a problem, as we plan on running a shuttle to downtown, and back. Please consider volunteering.

**Soon, we plan on sending out our newsletters electronically, as a cost savings measure, so please ensure we have an accurate email on file.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Events / Dinners – See our Social Calander or Facebook page

AA Meetings Every Monday at 6:30 pm - Community Center

Coffee with Vets, Tuesdays 10to 12 am - Community Center the event is open to everyone – please stop by and have a Cup of Joy with us, and see the Village

3/12/24 - Tennent Leadership Council

3/15/24, 9-11 am - Free Veterans Breakfast Community Center

6/5/25 - 4th Annual Rocky Bleier Golf Classic Royal St. Pats Golf Course, Wrightstown, WI

A Photographer has offered to take portraits here at the Village, free of charge. If interested signup sheets are in the laundry room. Dates TBA.

In the coming weeks we will be updating our website WisVVA.org to help Veterans, Dependents, Survivors and Caregivers, find resources for benefits, or services that are available from the VA, or locally. Please visit our website, follow us on Facebook, and sign up for our monthly newsletter.

**Visit Wisconsin Patriot Group Riders at [www.patriotgroup-wi.org](http://www.patriotgroup-wi.org)**

*The Patriot Guard Riders, Inc is an international organization with just over 175,000 members, most in the continental US. We are then divided into, and managed as, state units. You join the PGR through the national website and then usually associate yourself with one state. Some states have separated to create their own non-profit corporations, but Wisconsin is a registered agent of the National organization. Each state may operate a little differently.*

*We have a dedicated State website. The National site provides the most current information and is the official word on matters, but the State site serves the function of narrowing things down to include only items of interest in Wisconsin.*

*Many new members ask about our "ride schedule". If you have read the Mission Statement on the National site, you will notice that we are essentially a service organization providing honor guards and escorts at the funerals of the fallen and providing other support for all active military and veterans as we have resources. We do have a number of events that you will find on this website, from "Meet and Greet" gatherings to participation in other events like Air Shows or Veteran's recognition events, but we are not a "motorcycle club", so being in a van, car or truck is great. We also have a definite need for support vehicles that can carry flags (we have extras in every region) and a cooler with water in the summer and eventually some simple tools and first aid kit.*

*Support vehicles - so many feel bad about "caging it" (driving a car, truck, or minivan). WE NEED YOU more than you know. We need a lot of people who would be willing to bring the extra flags, water, possibly tools, and first aid kits to a mission. Please give this group a look, they are wonderful at what they do. Thank you!*

**You are not alone.**

Confidential crisis support is available 24/7.



Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers | 1

**Phone Numbers**

Veterans Crisis Line.....	Dial 988, then Press 1
VA Hotline.....	800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411, option 9)
MyVA411.....	800-698-2411
Bereavement Counseling (through Vet Centers).....	877-927-8387
Camp Lejeune Family Member Program.....	866-372-1144
Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA).....	800-733-8387
Community Care Billing Questions.....	877-881-7618
Debt Management Center.....	800-827-0648
Education.....	888-442-4551
Foreign Medical Program.....	877-345-8179 or 303-331-7590
Headstones and Markers.....	800-697-6947
Health Care.....	877-222-8387
Homeless Veterans.....	877-424-3838
Home Loans.....	877-827-3702
Life Insurance, All Programs Other than SGLI, FSGLI, TSGLI, VGLI.....	800-669-8477
Life Insurance, Veterans' Group Life Insurance Program (VGLI), Claims for Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Family SGLI.....	800-419-1473
National Cemetery Scheduling Office.....	800-535-1117
Native American Direct Home Loans.....	888-349-7541
Presidential Memorial Certificate Program.....	202-565-4964
Spina Bifida Program.....	888-820-1756
TTY, Federal Relay.....	711
VA Benefits.....	800-827-1000
Vet Center Call Center.....	877-927-8387
Women Veterans.....	877-222-8387
72-Hour Emergency Care Notification Line.....	844-724-7842