



HONOR

OUR

VETS

Story by: John F. Svandrlik, President VVA Chapter 79

Pictures from Bill Schroeder

In Sept. of 2008 I, along with Jerry Wheeler, another member of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 79, attended a Corvette show at the Bedford, Mass. VA Hospital. The shows proceeds benefited the patients in the hospital. Jerry asked me if we could have a show like this at our VA in Albany, NY. My response was that we don't have the manpower to do anything like this.

The next year, while attending a local car show, I was approached by two car show promoters. Bill Schroeder and Gerry Linen who had heard about the Bedford show. They asked if my chapter would want to sponsor a show like that in the Albany VA. I contacted John Rataino president of VVA Chapter 8 and he was interested. With the help of Bill and Gerry and Chapters 79 and 8 teaming up we now had the manpower.

Late in 2009 I contacted Peter Potter, the PR man for the hospital, and Karen Covey, the director of Voluntary Services. After receiving permission from the administration, we began having monthly meetings. There was a lot of work to be done, but with the volunteers things started to come together.

The date was set for August 7, 2010. The weather that day turned out sunny and warm. With conditions like that we had over 200 cars in attendance. Volunteers from both chapters, as well as from the hospital, arrived for registration, a silent auction, parking, etc. We had a DJ, Andy Narzynski, playing oldies and giving out door prizes. There were food vendors, antique military vehicles on display, a military honor guard to present the colors, and a VA employee, Scott Truesdell, sang the National Anthem. With all this, the show was a success.

Living in a hospital can be a depressing situation for the veterans. This show allowed many patients to come out for the day and view



ABOVE: Here is a small sampling of the many cars that came out to say thanks to the men and women who have served our great country. From stockers to hot rods and classics to modern, a little bit of everything was at this show.

many classic cars and military vehicles. It was a great morale booster. Over \$7,100 was raised that day. It all went to Voluntary Services which provided televisions for the patients, toiletries, clothing articles, blanket warmers for oncology patients, and much more. The camaraderie of all the participants added to the victory of this event.

On August 6, 2011 we will present the 2nd annual "Honor our Vets" car show at the Albany VA Hospital. Future shows will be held on the first Saturday of August each year. Information can be found at www.honorourvetscarshow.com. EHR



ABOVE: A nice '50 Ford cruised into the show. Look at that sun bounce off the chrome.



ABOVE: Paul Hoffman made the show in his custom built '55 Chevy Limo.



ABOVE: Beautifully restored '48 Ford F-1 pickup truck looks classy with wide whites.

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ABOVE: This Huger Orange '69 Camaro was one of many muscle cars there.