



Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
Clermont County, Chapter 649
P O Box 426, Batavia, Ohio 45103
www.vva649.org



Key Accomplishments of Chapter 649 in 2016

People may ask members of our Chapter what our mission is, why we don't contribute to this or that veterans' group, and what we do with the money we raise. The activities our Chapter initiates and sponsors flow from our mission statement,

“The mission of Chapter 649 of the Vietnam Veterans of America is to provide fellowship, advocacy, education about veteran benefits, as well as financial assistance, as appropriate, to veterans of all eras, pursuant to the founding principle of the Vietnam Veterans of America, “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”

The expenditures of Chapter 649 are targeted to help veterans in our community. Specifically, in the past year proceeds of money raised from the Golf Scramble, Memorial Brick sales, member dues, area Meet and Greet donations and other fund raising activities were used to:

- Provide approximately \$7,100 in cash donations and gift cards at Christmas and at other times to needy Clermont County veterans and their families. Some of this money was also contributed to other veterans' organizations to strengthen their efforts in our community. For example, in 2016 Chapter 649 contributed to the Clermont County Needy Kids project, which was sponsored by American Legion Post 72, the Ohio Chapter of the USO, and the Veterans Memorial Museum Foundation to mention just a few.
- Sponsor several “Bingo/Horse Race” nights at the VA Medical Center in Cincinnati. In addition to providing food, refreshments, and prize money, our members also chatted with and offered fellowship to the patients.
- Awarded a \$500 college scholarship to a 2016 Amelia High School graduate.
- Sent five delegates to the Buckeye State Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio where they voted on state issues and attended conferences. At these meetings, the delegates learned about current veterans' issues and pending national legislation. This information was passed onto local chapter members upon their return.
- Hold several “Meet and Greets” at Batavia Township Park, Eastgate Sam's Club, the Clermont County Fair, Eastgate Kroger's, and Everything Bagels in Eastgate. At these events, VVA members talked with area veterans, from, WWII to Afghanistan, and checked to see if they are aware of the many VA benefits to which they may be entitled. The success of these events can be measured by the fact that we are the largest VVA chapter in the State of Ohio with nearly 300 active members.

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- “Welcome Home” Honor Flight veterans on four different occasions as they returned from their trips to Washington, D.C.
- Conduct a Flag Retirement Ceremony in conjunction with local Boy Scout Troop 742. At this ceremony, emceed by WKRC radio host Brian Thomas, we instructed and demonstrated to the public the proper methods of disposing of old, tattered, and faded American flags.
- Host volunteer speakers at our monthly meetings to keep members informed of issues relevant to them. Some of our speakers in 2016 were: Ray Frey of Honor Flight Tristate who discussed newly relaxed veteran eligibility requirements for Honor Flights; Dan Knowles of the Tristate Veterans Community Alliance who spoke about how his organization helps veterans transition from military back into civilian life; and Sherry Ems of the Central and Southern USO who advised how the local USO assists military personnel in this area.
- Sponsor our 23rd annual Memorial Day vigil at Veterans Memorial Park. Each hour we “called the roll” of area deceased veterans from all eras and placed a small American flag on a sea of white crosses by the helicopter monument.
- Install new memorial bricks and maintained the visitor benches and other monuments at the Veterans Memorial Park.
- Speak at several area schools about our service in the military.
- Meet, chat, and sing with residents of the Veterans Home in Georgetown OH.

These are just a few of the events in which Chapter 649 either participated or hosted. Other events can be viewed at our website above and then clicking on the Photo Gallery button.

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