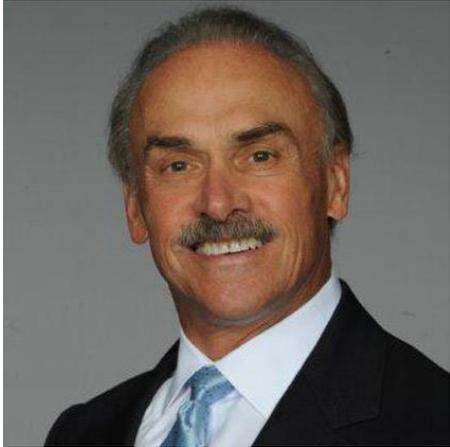


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Orland Park Presents "A Night to Remember" With Rocky Bleier



Rocky Bleier was a national champion at Notre Dame, a 16th round 1968 draft pick for the Pittsburgh Steelers and was drafted to serve in Vietnam in December, 1968. Robert Patrick "Rocky" Bleier was born March 5, 1946 in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Bleier is the featured speaker on Friday, November 4 when Orland Park Mayor Dan McLaughlin and the village's Veterans Commission present "A Night to Remember – One Vet to Another with Rocky Bleier."

"Those of us who grew up in this era remember Rocky Bleier and how he fought to return to the NFL after being seriously injured by a grenade in Vietnam," McLaughlin said. "His is a great story --- Notre Dame, the Pittsburgh Steelers and Vietnam."

The 6 p.m. event will be held at Palos Country Club, 13100 Southwest Highway in Orland Park. Tickets are \$50 per person and include a reception and refreshments.

Bleier was a running back for the Pittsburgh Steelers when he was drafted to go to Vietnam in December, 1968.

After he was wounded in August, 1969, Bleier was taken to Tokyo for surgery to remove more than 100 pieces of shrapnel from his right foot and leg. When told that he would not have the strength and flexibility to return to the NFL, Bleier made it his mission to return to the Steelers.

According to Fox Sports, Bleier spent the 1970 season on injured reserve and was put on waivers in 1971. He was placed on the Steelers' taxi squad after going unclaimed and made the team in 1972.

"The ability to play was up to me," Bleier said in a 2015 interview with Fox Sports. "Making the team was out of my control. That was somebody else's decision, but I was going to do whatever I possibly could to get myself in the shape to possibly come back."

The presentation is part of Orland Park being a community partner in the United States Department of Defense Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Named a community partner in 2013, Orland Park has hosted or will host two or more Vietnam oriented events during the commemoration years, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Tickets may be purchased at the Orland Park Village Clerk's Office at the Village Hall, 14700 South Ravinia Avenue. Seating is limited. For more information, call the Clerk's Office at 708/403-6150.

McLaughlin added, "Rocky Bleier earned the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star in Vietnam and four Super Bowl Championships with the Pittsburgh Steelers. We are very excited to welcome him to Orland Park."