

Injured Veterans on the Open Road with Wounded Warrior Project

Warriors Lead Hundreds of Motorcyclists on Maryland Tour

MARRIOTTSVILLE, Md., Sept. 12, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Lots of people like to take advantage of open roads and enjoy a leisurely Sunday cruise. A group of injured veterans with Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) took an extra special trek as they escorted hundreds of motorcycle riders for the Second Annual Ride with the Heroes.

Participants rode across Maryland on a 65-mile rural tour themed "Main Street Maryland." Wounded warriors and other riders enjoyed the enthusiastic applause, waves, and greetings from the community as they passed through the countryside and small towns.

"Everyone was really excited to have us there," said Air Force veteran Bill O'Brien. "The crowd cheered us on and welcomed us as we rode by."

The ride is an annual community event that recognizes service members including military, firefighters, and police and benefits nonprofits that contribute to public safety. Injured veterans received special acknowledgment during the opening ceremony.

"I enjoyed riding with fellow wounded warriors and the camaraderie that we had," Bill said. "It was nice to get out on the road with everyone."

Gatherings like this get wounded veterans out of the house and engaged with fellow warriors, limiting the common struggle of isolation faced by many returning from war. It can be difficult knowing how to overcome that challenge and rekindle bonds similar to those formed in the military.

"It is always rewarding and therapeutic to meet other warriors – just to talk and laugh," said Army veteran Sam Burns. "WWP really created a positive environment of togetherness at this outing."

WWP programs offer settings that provide opportunities for injured veterans to form bonds. The programs are personalized to encourage warriors, caregivers, and family members to reach educational and employment goals, while supporting physical, mental, and emotional recovery.

"Opportunities with WWP help me with day-to-day anxiety and stress," Bill said.

Thanks to generous donors, WWP programs and services are offered free of charge for a lifetime, and they are designed to aid in smoothing the transition into civilian life.

"WWP activities like this give me a mental retreat," Sam said. "Motorcycle riding is my greatest form of therapy, and for WWP to give wounded warriors access to this is outstanding."

About Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. The WWP purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public's aid for the needs of injured service members, to

help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit woundedwarriorproject.org.

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