

Former Steeler, Army veteran Rocky Bleier will be Memorial Day speaker at Army Heritage & Education Center, May 31

By Robert Martin, USAWC PAO 20 May 2021



Rocky Bleier, former Pittsburgh Steeler, will speak at the Memorial Day Ceremony at AHEC, May 31 at 10 am.

Army War College speakers support Memorial Day events throughout region (file photo)

Decorated Vietnam War veteran Rocky Bleier will be the guest speaker at this year's Carlisle Memorial Day ceremony, sponsored by the Carlisle Joint Veterans Council of Carlisle. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. Monday, May 31, at the Soldiers Walk at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, 950 Soldiers Drive, featuring the Carlisle Town Band and Carlisle High School Band.

Rocky Bleier, prominent as Pittsburgh Steeler #20, halfback in 1968 and 1970-1980. Bleier played [college football](#) at the [University of Notre Dame](#) in [South Bend, Indiana](#), 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.

Drafted into the [U.S. Army](#) at the end of 1967, during the [Vietnam War](#), he volunteered for duty in South Vietnam and 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, sending shrapnel into his lower right leg [\[9\]](#) He lost part of his right foot in the blast as well. [\[10\]\[11\]](#) He was later awarded the [Bronze Star](#) and [Purple Heart](#). His rank was Specialist 4.

After several surgeries, he was discharged from the Army in 1970, and joined the Steelers in camp in 1970. 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.

Rain or shine - the Memorial Day event at AHEC will move indoors if there is inclement weather.

Note: Carlisle is not sponsoring a Memorial Day Parade this year.

Memorial Day 2021 events in Cumberland County

Below is a list of Memorial Day Events scheduled throughout Cumberland County by Veterans and civilian Organizations. Army War College speakers are in bold print. This list is not comprehensive, just the ones that we know of in Cumberland County.

Sunday, May 23, 2021

Newburg (Newburg Memorial Day Committee) will hold their annual Memorial Day Observance with a Morning worship service at 10:45 a.m. on the Monument Green. The annual Memorial Day Parade will move through town promptly at 2 p.m. In inclement weather, the parade will be canceled, and the Newburg Community Memorial Service will be held at the Newburg UM Church, 203 N. High Street. The guest speaker is Army War College student Col. Brian Jacobson. Contact person: Curt Cramer, 729-5459.

Tuesday, May 25

Central Penn College will host a Memorial Day Ceremony at noon at the flag pole in front of its ATEC Building, 600 Valley Road, Summerdale, with

guest speaker Col. Leo Wyszynski, director of the Center for Strategic Leadership the U.S. Army War College.

Sunday, May 30, 2021

Mount Holly Springs VFW Post 7343 will hold a small Memorial Day Ceremony at the Mount Holly Springs Cemetery at 1:00 p.m. The guest speaker will be Army War College Student Lt. Col. Paul A. Tomcik. Contact person: Rick Bower, 717-440-2635.

Boys Scouts Troop 180 Longsdorf Cemetery at Locust Point Road, New Kingstown at 1 p.m. The guest speaker is Army War College student Lt. Col. Daman Torres.

Also at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Boy Scout Christopher Adam will receive his Eagle Scout badge in his BSA troop's Honor Court at the site of Liberation Pointe. Adam designed and developed the prominent World War II exhibit that greets every visitor to the Army Heritage and Education Center as his Eagle Scout project, with manpower and donations contributed by the Carlisle VFW, fellow Scouts and major supporters in the region.

Monday, May 31, 2021

Camp Hill-American Legion Post 43 will hold a Memorial Day Service at 9:30 a.m. at the Camp Hill Cemetery behind the Fire Hall at 2145 Walnut Street, Camp Hill. In inclement weather, the service will be held at the Camp Hill Borough Building at 2145 Walnut Street, Camp Hill. There will NOT be a parade this year. The guest speaker will be Lt. Col. Matthew P. Smith, PA Army National Guard. Contact person: Commander Keith Beebe, 717-574-5000.

Carlisle -The Joint Veterans Council of Carlisle will hold a Memorial Day Service beginning at 10 a.m. at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, 950 Soldiers Drive, Carlisle. There will NOT be a parade this year. Contact person: Kirk Wilson, 717-226-1554.

The Mechanicsburg Area Veterans Council will hold a Memorial Day Service at the Mechanicsburg Cemetery GAR monument on Marble Street at 11 a.m., rain or shine. There will NOT be a parade this year. The guest speaker will be retired Army Col. Doug Eppers. Contact person: Paul Kreiner, Jr., President, 579-4560.

Newville: The Joint Veterans Council of Newville will hold a parade starting

at 1 p.m. Services will immediately follow the parade at the fountain and will include a guest speaker and playing of Taps. In inclement weather, the parade will be canceled, and services will be held at the American Legion Faylor Wagner Post 421 at 28 Shepherd Road, Newville.

The Vietnam Veterans of Mechanicsburg will hold a Memorial Service at 2 p.m. at the Lincoln Colored Cemetery off Winding Hill Road in Mechanicsburg, rain or shine.

Shippensburg -The Joint Veterans Council of Shippensburg will hold the annual Memorial Day Ceremonies and Parade beginning at 10 a.m. at Locust Grove Cemetery, followed by services at Spring Hill Cemetery at 11 a.m. and flag-raising ceremony at Shippensburg Veterans Memorial Park at noon. At 1:15 p.m., the Navy & Marine Memorial Services will be conducted at Branch Bridge on King Street.

Memorial Day Parade will begin at 2 p.m. from the corner of King and Prince Streets. In inclement weather, each unit returns to the post involved for refreshments and a time of fellowship. Contact person: Guy Hayslett, Shippensburg Veterans Council President, 717-385-2168.