

# Fast & Furious Fun



## for Veterans

by Alisha McMillen

It's a simple plan with a lot of logistics ... a day designed for our community's veterans to have a great experience doing something new and exciting.

"It's their day to have fun," says Bill Hoffman, president of the Corvette Owners Club of Houston, a 501(c) organization with 170 members representing 230 Corvettes. Bill created the club's Vettes for Vets experience 15 years ago, thanks to "Sarge."

"Sarge was an older gentleman who spent years as a gunner in the Marines," Bill explains. "We learned there were things Sarge wanted to do that he couldn't. We decided to create a program to give vets a great day, no strings attached, and Sarge was able to attend the first two years."

This year, Vettes for Vets partnered with Combat Marine Outdoors (CMO) who invited their veterans to participate. The event was held Saturday, Sept. 7.

"We met in Sugar Land Town Square, where we paired a veteran passenger with a Corvette and its driver. We all caravanned to the Motor Speedway Resort of Houston. Drivers took their passengers around the track for six to eight laps, followed by lunch in the Drivers' Meeting Room. Since the beginning, Joe's BBQ in Alvin has provided lunch for the veterans. Joe is a veteran and knows how important it is to treat our veterans with kindness and gratitude," Bill continues.

This year, the event had 28 Corvettes and veterans rounding the



track. Bill drove his own 2016 Z06/Z07 Corvette. "Ninety-nine percent of the veterans had never ridden in a Corvette before," says David Alexander, Fixed Operations Director for Classic Chevrolet. "It makes each veteran feel like they're part of something. It's one of the best types of service we can provide in our community – giving our veterans a day of enjoyment that makes them feel like the person they want to be."

Classic also provides an SUV that caravans with the group holding the veterans' caregivers and necessary medical equipment. "We also

have two EMT squads waiting, in case they're needed," Bill says.

"We took Classic Chevy's Z06 model, along with a standard Corvette," says Garner Anderson, Corvette manager at Classic Chevrolet. "My veteran and I shared life stories and enjoyed the ride together. We owe our veterans any little thing we can do to make their day better."

Also a Corvette manager, Aaron Strand, an Army veteran himself says, "It's good for our community to know we're responsible for our veterans. Unfortunately, a lot of our vets feel forgotten. If you can be an ear and have a little fun – that little contribution can make a big difference."

"I couldn't do this every year without my dedicated sponsors Classic Chevrolet and Sugar Land Town Square," Bill concludes. For more information about Vettes for Vets or the Corvette Owners Club of Houston, visit [www.corvetteownersclubhouston.com](http://www.corvetteownersclubhouston.com).

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