



**CHAPTER 391**  
*Tuolumne County, California*

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA**  
**GUERRILLAS IN THE MIST**

**Vietnam Veterans - Chapter 391**

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## City & County make WHVVD resolutions

The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors issued a resolution on the morning of January 19 to become the first county in California to do so while the Sonora City Council became the second city in California to issue a resolution for Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day (WHVVD). Both resolutions spoke of the Vietnam Conflict.

The resolutions came about when, on September 29, 2009, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB-717 at Twenty-nine Palms Marine Corps base making March 30,

WHVVD. California became the first state to pass such a bill. The Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 391 (VVA-391), the largest Chapter in the State, began preparing for a parade and petitioned both the Supervisors and the Council to issue resolutions to honor the many Vietnam veterans who live in the area.

It all began in 2000 when Jose Ramos of Whittier, California, started a grass roots effort to make March 30 as WHVVD and in 2007, the U.S. Congress issued a resolution proclaiming March 30 as a National WHVVD. The first celebration was in Whittier, California in 2008. The VVA California State Council got behind it and Assemblyman Paul Cook (R-Yucca Valley) introduced the bill. Since the signing by the Governor, Tuolumne County leads

the state in endorsing the bill by issuing its proclamation. Rancho Cucamonga was the first city to do so while Sonora is the second.

The day will be celebrated on March 28 this year as WHVVD falls on a weekday. Sonora will be the scene of the only parade in California and the nation made up of only Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans. This is being organized by Tuolumne County's VVA-391 sponsored by numerous citizens and businesses within the county and as far away as Stockton, Merced,

Mariposa, Tracy, and Modesto who will also have Vietnam veterans invited to be in the parade.

According to Parade Chairman George Eldridge, "I feel this parade is very important and it will begin the healing of old wounds when the war ended March 30, 1975. It's the parade we never received." Eldridge has designed a poster for the event which has been distributed to VVA chapters throughout the state and nationally through the VVA's Veteran magazine. It also appeared on the front cover of the Zephyr, the VVA's California State Council's newspaper. "We invite every Vietnam Veteran in America to come and join our parade and be welcomed home!", he said. The Chapter has members from all over including Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Nevada as well as all

over California. According to Eldridge, they hold more fund-raisers which support their community than any other chapter in the state. In 2009, they raised more than \$134,000.

Ramos, founder and chair of WHVVD, Inc. has asked, "In your state, in your town, in your community, come

*See Parade, page 7*

## Co-pay increase is delayed for 6 months

A \$1 increase in co-payments for outpatient medications for veterans who do not qualify for free prescriptions is being delayed for six months while the Veterans Affairs Department reviews its options. Copayments are required for a 30-day supply of medication provided on an outpatient basis to people being treated for disabilities or conditions that are not related to military service. Copayments are not charged for veterans who have service-connected disabilities rated at 50% or more, regardless of whether they are being treated for a service-connected issue, and copayments are waived for some low-income veterans. The current charge of \$8 was supposed to rise to \$9 on 1 JAN 2010 under regulations that call for prescription drug charges to keep pace with prescription drug charges in the private sector. But on 31 DEC, VA officials announced in the Federal Register that they were delaying the increase until 1 JUL so they could reconsider how increases are calculated. This delays both the \$1 hike and a \$120 increase in the \$960 copayment cap on drug costs for veterans who have service-connected disabilities but are being treated for

*See Co-pay delayed, page 2*



*Jon Cavaiani, Medal of Honor recipient and former POW will be the grand marshal at the parade. See page 4.*