

## Parade approved, *from page 1*

places as Whittier and Pleasanton which will both have a ceremony at a local venue for the community, but Sonora will have the only parade in the state. The author of the bill, Paul Cook of Yucca Valley, a Vietnam Veteran, is hosting an event in his community. Both the City of Sonora and the County of Tuolumne have issued proclamations for WHVVD. Another thing that makes Sonora and the County stand out is its size. The County is one of the smallest and least populated in California yet is home to the largest VVA chapter in the State and 9<sup>th</sup> largest in the nation out of 650 chapters. The largest chapter in the country is VVA-172 in Cumberland, Maryland.

Eldridge reports that the 1:00 p.m. parade will proceed down Washington Street to Stockton Road and end at the parking lot for Mother Lode Bank. Leading the parade will be a Sheriff's cruiser driven by a deputy sheriff who is also a Vietnam veteran. The parade committee is attempting to get an active duty Color Guard from Lemoore Naval Air Station which is near Fresno. They are also working with getting a band from Fresno which also has several Vietnam-era and Vietnam veterans. These will be followed by the Grand Marshal who is Sonora resident Jon Cavaiani who is a Medal of Honor Recipient and former POW in Vietnam and he will be followed by the Color Guard of VVA-Chapter 391. This Color Guard is well known in Tuolumne County as they provide the Color Guard at many events in the County.

"I hope that many people will go to our web site and get a



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sponsor form

([www.VietnamVeterans391.org](http://www.VietnamVeterans391.org)) and sign up to Welcome Home our Vietnam veterans.

I also hope that Vietnam Veterans everywhere will also get an Entry Form and join us at the parade," added Eldridge. VVA-Chapter 391 has two sponsorships. The first is \$100 and the second is \$200. A \$200 sponsor also gets a 3x7-foot banner to be carried in the parade with the donor's name on the banner. Eldridge said that there is also a flyer on the web site as well.

The Associates of Vietnam Veterans (AVVA), Chapter 391 will also be selling souvenir t-shirts at the event. They can also be purchased earlier than the parade when

they go on sale on the web site beginning March 1. Also, they plan on placing the poster for WHVVD on sale. It will be a collector's item as it is the only poster done just for WHVVD in the first state to have such a celebration.

Eldridge can be contacted at [George@Eldridge.net](mailto:George@Eldridge.net) or by calling (209) 984-1378 for more information or questions about the Parade. The forms for entry and sponsorship as well as the flyer are located on the web site at [www.VietnamVeterans391.org](http://www.VietnamVeterans391.org). The deadlines for the forms are March 15 for sponsors and March 22 for entries.

The parade begins at 1 p.m. and after staging on School Street, the parade will advance to the corner of Snell and Washington, proceed to Stockton Road, and end in the parking lot of the Mother Lode Bank and Bertelli's Pharmacy.



**March 2, 2010** • VVA-391 Board Meeting at the Veterans Memorial Hall.

**March 2, 2002** • U.S. invasion of Afghanistan Operation Anaconda begins (ending March 19 after killing 500 Taliban and al Qaeda fighters with 11 Western troop fatalities).

**March 3, 1931** • Star Spangled Banner was made as the National Anthem

**March 7, 1968** • Battle of Saigon began on the date the Tet Offensive ended.

**March 7, 1971** • 1000 U.S. planes bomb Cambodia and Laos.

**March 8, 1965** • Over 4,000 Marines land at DaNang and becomes the first combat troops in Vietnam.

**March 9, 2010** • VVA-391 Pot Luck and General Meeting at Sonora Veterans Memorial Hall, A-G bring a dessert, H-M bring a salad, N-Z bring a main dish. Bring enough for 6-8 people. Bring a prospective member to dinner. Meeting at 7 p.m. Elections will be held at the April General Meeting.

**March 17, 2010** • St. Patrick's Day

**March 17, 1973** • First POWs released from "Hanoi Hilton".

**March 19, 2003** • Operation Iraqi Freedom begins.

**March 20, 2003** • Iraq Invasion began without UN support and in defiance of world opinion.

**March 20, 2010** • Spring Equinox

**March 27, 1794** • Congress authorizes construction of six frigates including USS CONSTITUTION.

**March 29, 1973** • Naval Advisory Group and Naval Forces, Vietnam disestablished and last POW leaves.