

Alfred Lugo, Chairman

Adrian Morales, Vice Chairman

Sylvia Ramos, Wife

Louie Adame, President WHVVD

Joe Leal, Founder Vet Hunters

David Herrera

Martha Morales

JOSE G. RAMOS WHITTIER BICYCLE MONUMENT

Newsletter

February 21, 2018



Whittier, California

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, Inc. and American Legion Post 51 supporting the Jose G. Ramos Whittier Bicycle Monument



Photo credit Fred Shacklett Post 51 Area 4 Historian

Whittier City Parks and Recreation and Community Affairs Director Greg Alaniz presented to the Whittier City Council Alfred Lugo and The Jose G. Ramos Bicycle Monument Committee and the Parks Department's proposal.

Upon discussion, the city council, consisting of Mayor Pro Tem, Cathy Warner, Council Member Fernando Dutra and Council Member Josue Alvarado, (Mayor Joe Vinatieri and Council Member Bob Henderson were ill) moved to support the monument project and added that this monument should be a city memorial for Whittier Jose G. Ramos' courageous trip and struggle to have Vietnam Veterans recognized and welcomed and should be a proud and everlasting monument.

Proposal budget was an estimated \$20,000. The city voted 3-0 to spend up to \$50,000.00 to construct the monument. The committee, Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, Inc. and Whittier American Legion Post 51 were elated in the city's support to achieve the goals of the Jose G. Ramos Bicycle Monument

WHITTIER LOCAL DAILY NEWS

Whittier plans memorial for Jose Ramos, former Army medic who rode bike across U.S. twice to honor Vietnam veterans



(Photo by Sarah Reingewirtz, Pasadena Star-News/SCNG)

Sylvia Ramos visits Whittier's Peace Memorial Wednesday with the bike that her late husband, Jose, rode twice across the country to promote Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. A memorial will be built for the Army veteran near the site.



The Peace Memorial is one of the sites in consideration for the man who rode his bike across the country for veterans.

REMEMBERING VETS

Jose G. Ramos, [a former Army combat medic from Whittier who died last year](#), worked for more than a decade to see a day honoring veterans of the Vietnam War recognized.

Now, his hometown plans to recognize the man himself — Whittier will soon build a memorial dedicated to Ramos and the pair of cross-country bike rides he undertook as part of his lobbying effort.

Councilman Fernando Dutra called Ramos “a local hero.”

“We want to create a memorial everybody can be proud of,” Dutra said.

The city council voted 3-0 — Mayor Joe Vinatieri and Councilman Bob Henderson were absent — to spend up to \$50,000 to create the memorial to be placed either next to the city’s current Peace Memorial in front of City Hall or on the Greenway Trail next to Palm Park.

The memorial will include the bicycle that Ramos, who died Sept. 3 at age 68, rode from Irwindale to Washington D.C. twice.

Through his advocacy, Ramos was instrumental in California establishing March 30 as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in 2009, followed by its formal recognition by the U.S. Senate in 2011. Sylvia Ramos, Jose’s wife of 50 years, said Wednesday her husband had previously approved the donation of his Giant-brand bicycle. But he still would have been shocked by the news. “He would have been surprised and honored,” she said. “That was my Jose. He was still quiet and humble.”

The late Jose Ramos and his bicycle.

The Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Committee has started a GoFundMe page to help offset the cost of the project. They hope to raise \$3,000.

Alfred Lugo, a Whittier Vietnam veteran, first proposed the idea memorializing what Ramos did for veterans.

“He woke (veterans) up to the idea that it’s OK to be a Vietnam veteran,” Lugo said. “You don’t have to keep it quiet. Jose Ramos gave them the feeling that you can be proud that you served in Vietnam.”

Ramos’ advocacy for Vietnam veterans spanned decades after returning from his tour of duty in the country, where he served from 1967-68.

He stood by Arnold Schwarzenegger when the former governor signed the day into law in 2009.



(photo courtesy of Ramos Family)

Since then, [45 states and Puerto Rico have recognized a Vietnam Veterans Day](#) on a variety of dates — usually March 29 or 30. In 2017, [President Donald Trump signed a law](#) declaring March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

By [MIKE SPRAGUE](#) | msprague@scng.com | Whittier Daily News
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A GoFundMe for Jose G. Ramos Created

Committee member, Adrian Morales, has created a GoFundMe account for the Jose G. Ramos Whittier Bicycle Monument.

Target goal is \$5,000.00. Any additional donations received will go to the monument maintenance and to Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day non-profit organization.

[WE ARE REACHING OUR GOAL PLEASE DONATE!](#)

<https://www.gofundme.com/jose-g-ramos-bike-monument>



WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY! (“WHVVD, INC.”) Proudly Presents Our 10th Annual “Welcome Home Veterans Day” celebration on Sunday, April 8, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Sierra Vista High School football field. It is a day to thank and **Welcome Home** all men and women who served and those now serving in the armed forces regardless of when or where they served. This is a day with live music with **Jerry Salas and the “Rock for Vets”** band and fun for the entire family. There will be a classic car show, military vehicles display, military memorabilia, great food, various craft vendors, and of course, a fun zone for the kids. **JOIN US!**

CONTACT

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LETTER FROM ALFRED LUGO TO WHITTIER CITY COUNCIL

Dear Mayor Joe Vinatieri and City Councilmembers,

I am addressing our Whittier City Council, Whittier residents and visitors regarding my proposal and the proposal of the Jose G. Ramos Whittier Bicycle Monument Committee which will be on tonight's agenda.

Our proposed monument in honor of Jose G. Ramos, Vietnam Veteran, resident and Founder of the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, Inc. is simple in design but monumental in its meaning.

Our monument, your monument and the city's monument when visited by neighbors and their children, neighboring cities and tourists and after a moment of reflection upon reading Jose G. Ramos' historic bicycle Trek from Whittier, California to Washington D.C., may not be able to understand his dedicated mission...have March 30th proclaimed Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day by the President. This memorial in not just a story of a man and his bike.

This simple memorial to all will teach the struggles that Jose G. Ramos endured to achieve his mission. But to many Vietnam Veterans there will be significant meanings, many memories and deep feelings which many, who did not get involved with the Vietnam War, will not be able to know or understand.

We on the committee know that this memorial will be educational but more important will continue to reach Jose G. Ramos' mission, to open the door and invite his Vietnam brothers who are suffering to realize he and we are proud of their service, sacrifices and to support their healing from the hurt they feel from a war which America did not like as well as the soldiers who fought there.

Would you like to know how Jose Ramos Felt? In the documentary, "Vietnam A Long Time Coming" Jose tells what it was like to be a medic, a 19-year-old kid with 10 weeks of training and an aid kit, "The thing about being a medic you become alienated. In a combat zone when it comes time for battle with rifles, everyone participated. When it comes time for life and death, you're alone. Everybody walks away, they dragged the wounded back to you but you're left alone to work."

Jose just wanted all Vietnam Veterans to feel proud of being a Veteran and not continue to feel the hurt some Americans instilled in them as they returned. That is why this simple memorial represents many messages. I and the committee want to thank Whittier City Council for their sincere interest in entertaining the thought and proposal for our Jose G. Ramos Whittier Bicycle Monument, a memorial for a soldier who cared for his fellow soldiers.

Thank you for this time and interest.

Alfred Lugo

Chairman

Jose G. Ramos Whittier Bicycle Monument



Alfred Lugo presenting letter to Whittier City Council
(Photo credit Fred Shacklett)



Graduation Day Garfield High School 2017
(photo credit Joe Leal)

Warriors welcome home Vietnam War vets

"Most of them have not been welcomed," says event organizer

By Brady Rhoades

Veterans gathered at Paracel Seafood Restaurant in Westminster on Sunday night in an annual event dedicated to welcoming home those who served in the Vietnam War.

"This is an amazing event," said Joe Leal, a U.S. Army veteran of the Iraq War who helped organized the gathering. "Anytime we can do something to remember a veteran, we're going to do it."

Leal said he is thankful for all the veterans who came before him, and has a special place in his heart for Vietnam War vets.

"We go there to thank the Vietnam veterans. Most of them have not been welcomed home," Leal said. "It's a healing pro-

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Photo by Loreen Berlin

A chorus performs during the veterans' event at Paracel Seafood Restaurant in Westminster on Sunday night.



Photo by Loreen Berlin

Veterans and those who support veterans gathered at the Paracel Seafood Restaurant in Westminster on Sunday night to welcome home those who served in the Vietnam War. Those in attendance are also working to raise \$15,000 for a monument to Jose Ramos, founder of Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. From left, are Alfredo Lugo, chairman of the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans group; Hugh Pham, a supporter of the cause; and Ret. U.S. Army Sgt. First Class Adrian Elias Morales.

VETS:

Continued from page 1

cess."

Veterans from many wars were present at what was dubbed a "Tet New Year Dinner," coinciding with the traditional Vietnamese celebration of the Lunar New Year.

The annual Tet Parade will be held on Bolsa Avenue on Saturday, Feb. 17. This year is

The Year of the Dog; the dog represents honesty and loyalty.

Tet is one of the biggest events of the year in Orange County, drawing as many as 20,000 people to the parade.

The dinner served a second purpose: to pay tribute to Jose Ramos, founder of Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. Leal said he and other veterans are trying to raise \$15,000 for a Jose Ramos monument, to be built in the city of Whittier.

"Jose Ramos' actions and his cause to serve veterans deserve to be remembered for many future generations to follow," Leal said. "Jose Ramos may have not been a famous actor, singer, athlete or politician — who usually get statues/memorial after their passing — but for those who knew Jose, his tireless actions and selfless service, know that fighting and working hard to have a memorial built is a mission we cannot fail."