

AV Day Veterans' Parade

Antelope Valley Veterans' Day Parade
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For Immediate Release
April 22, 2009

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DICK RUTAN IS GRAND MARSHAL FOR ANTELOPE VALLEY VETERAN'S DAY PARADE

LANCASTER, CA. The Antelope Valley's *First Annual* Veteran's Day Parade committee announced, today, the selection of Dick Rutan as the parade's 2009 Grand Marshal. A name well-known in the Antelope Valley, Rutan has an impressive resume of flying accomplishments. The Veteran's Day event is slated for Saturday, November 7, 2009.

In December 1986, Lt. Col Dick Rutan made history when he completed a nine-day, three-minute and forty four-second non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world. He set world records that remain unchallenged to this day.

Rutan received his driver's license and solo pilot's license on the same day – his 16th birthday. He flew 325 missions in Vietnam, 105 of them as a member of the Super Sabre FAC, a high-risk operation that was known as the "Misty's". On his last mission Rutan was hit by enemy ground fire and had to eject from his burning F-100. He was later rescued.

Lt. Col Rutan has been awarded the Silver Star, five distinguished Flying Crosses, 16 Air Medals and a Purple Heart. He successfully completed the "Around the World in 80 Nights" tour in 1997 in two small experimental Long-EZ aircraft. The following year he attempted a third around-the-world record, which ended up with a life saving parachute jump.

In July of 2002, Dick Rutan was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton, Ohio. Then in 2005, he set a world record distance record in the EZ Rocket. Currently he is building a Berkut airplane with plans to challenge more world records, possibly breaking some of his own.

Joining Rutan will be three honorary Grand Marshals ... Captain Thomas Craft – SC USN (Ret.), Jim Hildreth – WWII Veteran & Ex POW, and Catalina Rodrigues – WWII Veteran.

This inaugural Veterans Day Parade is expected to be one of the largest in the area. Edwards Air Force Base personnel will participate in significant ways. Planned activities include flyovers, area bands and multiple color guard units.

The next parade committee meeting is Wednesday, May 6th at 3 PM sharp at the AV Red Cross at 2715 East Avenue P in Palmdale. Anyone interested in helping with the parade may attend. For more information go to www.avvparade.com or call Mark Chapa at (661) 729-8655.

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see photo below:

Lt. Col Dick Rutan

