

lanny Keith was only 20 when he took a one-month leave from the U.S. Mines to marry his high school sweetheart. Less than three months later, Keith returned home to Salinas in a casket-covered coffin.

Keith's life — and his death — inspired David Keith to honor his brother and the 78 other Monterey County men who were killed or died as a result of the conflict in Vietnam.

With the help of the city of Salinas and Monterey County, Keith and others are creating the Monterey County Vietnam Memorial and All Veterans Memorial Park on a bluff overlooking the city on East Laurel



David Keith has been instrumental in building the Salinas memorial to Monterey County's Vietnam War casualties.

VERN FISHER/The Herald

Drive in Salinas. Memorial Day ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday in the park. Members of the committee trying to complete the park will also hold a "fund-raising, groundbreaking, ribbon-cutting kickoff ceremony" on Saturday. It is not only a park, but it will be a place you can go for solace and a place to give reverence to those who gave their all," Keith said. "We hope the park will be an educational tool

for the people of Salinas and all of Monterey County." Local veterans formed a committee to create the park 11 years ago. During the intervening years, the group secured the property along Laurel Drive from the county for \$1. The city contributed \$500,000 from sale of the

Crazy Horse Landfill. The park has slowly developed over the years, with some landscaping and several memorials, including a flag with the 78 names painted on plywood. The group now plans to establish a

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# Memorial Weekend events

## Today

**Fund-raiser:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Shaker Square, Boronda and Natividad, Salinas. Army climbing wall, Navy dunk tank, color guard. Food, prizes, a dog wash and one-minute nail grooming. Proceeds benefit the Everett Alvarez High School Band and the ROTC program.

**Park project kickoff:** 11 a.m. at All Veterans Park, East Laurel Drive near Constitution, Salinas. Memorial Day service and ribbon-cutting. Event kicks off a fund-raising drive for the Monterey County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park adjacent to the park.

## Today and Sunday

**Blues show, craft fair:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Custom House Plaza and Alvarado Street, Monterey. Second annual Red, White & a Little Blues... and Some Latin, Too! Music festival, arts and crafts booths. Today's

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at the Naval Postgraduate School, but it was moved this year because of heightened security at the military school. The concert usually attracts a few thousand people. Selections include Brahms' Academic Festival Overture, one of Dvorak's Slavonic dances, Anderson's Bugler's Holiday, Lowden's Armed Forces Salute, and a preview selection of a concert performance of the opera "Rigoletto" that the symphony will perform in June with the Monterey Opera.

**American Legion rites:** 11 a.m. at Devendorf Park, Carmel. Carmel American Legion Post 512 Memorial Day commemoration, featuring honor guard from Monterey High School. People attending the ceremony are invited to gather afterward at the Legion Hall at Dolores Street and 8th Avenue. More information: 372-5257.

Keith is also a veteran of Vietnam, serving 27 months aboard the USS Ranger. Keith returned to the United States in 1966. He said his family received the telegram that his brother had been injured on Mother's Day, 1967. Danny Keith died of his wounds June 2, 1967. "It destroyed the family," said David Keith. Another younger brother, who was in high school in 1967, died as a result of hepatitis after he ran away from home. His parents were never the same. "I don't think you can ever get over something like that."

**Monday**  
**Symphony concert:** 2 p.m. on Colton Hall lawn off Pacific Street, Monterey. Monterey Bay Symphony's annual Memorial Day concert. Free. In previous years the concert was held

**Memorial**  
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lasting memorial, an 8-foot by 20-foot bronze "Flag of Names." The names of Monterey County's Vietnam War casualties will be added in red letters to form the seven red stripes on the flag. The eight-acre park is split into two levels. Much of the lower section is complete. But Keith's committee plans to raise about \$80,000 for the flag and for several other memorials on the upper level. Much of the landscape and construction work will be donated by local contractors, he said.

Seven years ago, only one state had an obesity rate above 20 percent of U.S. adults considered obese. By 2000, 22 states were in that category.

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