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of
DIABLO VALLEY**



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Memorial Day

Flash

A SPECIAL VNVDV ANNOUNCEMENT

MAY 2007

“MEMORIAL DAY” At Danville’s Oakhill Park Member & Family BBQ

Memorial Day

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day and is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Traditional observance of Memorial day has diminished over the years in most parts of our country. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day, and no longer pass this historical information to their children. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored and neglected, while most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held an observance or ceremony in decades. Some people *think* the day is for honoring *any and all dead...* and not *just those fallen in service to our country*. Fortunately the **Town of Danville** and the supporting communities in the Diablo Valley have not... and join with the *VietNam Veterans of Diablo Valley* and ALL VETERANS to honor and remember our nation's fallen heroes and bring respect to the day.

Memorial Day is much more than a three-day weekend that marks the beginning of summer. To many people, especially the nation's thousands of combat veterans, this day, which has a history stretching back to the Civil War, is an important reminder of those who died in the service of their country. As veterans... We Remember!

“MEMORIAL DAY - 2007”

Oakhill Park - Danville
Monday - MAY 28 - 10AM

Memorial Day was originally known as *Decoration Day* because it was a time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by decorating their graves. It was first widely observed on May 30, 1868, to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, by proclamation in General Order No. 11 of General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of former sailors & soldiers. On May 5, 1868, Logan declared that:

The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. *In this observance no form of ceremony is prescribed, but comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.*

During the first celebration of Decoration Day, **General James Abram Garfield** (later President) made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried in the cemetery. This 1868 celebration was inspired by local observances of the day in towns throughout America that had taken place in the three years since the Civil War.

Continued on Page Three...

NEXT General Membership Meeting on 1st Thursday of JUNE (7th)
1700 = Social - 1830 = Dinner & Meeting with Guest Speaker @ 1900
JUNE 07th Meeting @ Crow Canyon Country Club - Danville

MEMORIAL DAY - MONDAY - MAY 28th at OAK HILL PARK

Work Party - Event - Member's Only Picnic Information

The VNVDV and **Bill Picton** - Chair for the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony Committee is *pleased to announce* the **0700 "WORK PARTY"** at Oak Hill Park in Danville. Your help is needed in set-up ... please be there! Some members should arrive at the Veteran's Building in Danville, if they have a truck to move chairs & tables to the park, and all others should arrive at the park to assist with set-up of the shade and chairs when they arrive. If you have a "motor home" please arrive early and bring it to the rear of the high school parking lot for positioning early for the family BBQ,

This year... one again over 1,000 community members, family, friends and veterans are expected at the Town of Danville's Annual **Memorial Day Ceremonies**. This year will also feature a program at the beautiful "**All Wars Memorial**" in Oak Hill Park.

A reminder to all members... There is not a "**Public**" BBQ / Picnic hosted by the VNVDV. The **VietNam Veterans of Diablo Valley** will again have our special "**MEMBERS ONLY**" **Family BBQ & Pot-Luck Picnic**. All members - Please be sure to check with Marty De Venuta to ensure your VNVDV Annual Dues are current to attend. As in the past... All members are requested to BRING enough food (salads—deserts—vegetables—snacks & dips, etc.) to share" with other members, in addition - to your own family. Also remember to bring your own ice, plates, napkins & beverages. Only the BBQ meat *is provided* and cooked at the event. All members and family **MUST BRING** either - side dishes - salads - appetizers - chips - dips - snacks or desserts... and do not forget to keep your items "on ice" on in a cooler to stay fresh until the BBQ. The location of our "Members Only" BBQ will be again in the lower corner of the park - next to the high school's new grouping of large mobile classrooms. We will again arrive early (0700) and roped-off a private area for our Member's Only BBQ Picnic, RV's first on either side - NO vehicles inside the BBQ area. Get their not only to help volunteer - but to get a good parking space too!

We hope to also have the beautiful **Huey Helicopter** from VietNam on display from the Concord VET Center along the fence area - just in front of the "roped-off" BBQ Area. Please arrive early and check-in with Bill Picton for your assignment. But... first remember the "**work party**" starting at **0700** setting-up for Memorial Day. If you cannot arrive until 0730 or 0800 fine... but - please "show up" to help fellow members prepare for our annual event. Come out to the central grass area in the park—not the BBQ area for work assignments from Bill Picton. Also another important reminder ... **Tear-Down & Clean-Up**... after the end of the Memorial Day Ceremonies. Much of the crowd will move up to the "All Wars Memorial" and we will need to be ready to fold & stack all the chairs and take-down the shade cover and police-up the park - so everyone's assistance would be appreciated. We must return the chairs to the Veteran's Building in Danville.

The work will go quick if we all help and work together. Then there will be plenty of time for all our fellow members to gather and party! We are still planning on having a *great deal* of **FOOD - FUN - FRIENDSHIP** - at our VNVDV "**Members & Family BBQ Pot-Luck Picnic**"... **please join us!** **There is lots to do between 7AM and 10AM** before the large audience arrives. Also as a reminder... You may want to bring your own folding chairs, card table, a camera, radio, your favorite beverages, lots of ice & don't forget your "foods to share!" Of course... "Cigars" are optional! Please keep food items refrigerated and on-ice all morning... *we don't want to lose anyone!* See you on Monday the 28th for set-up at Oak Hill Park. Thanks for your assistance and help!

All current members and their family & special guests are *encouraged to stay afterwards and participate* in this special time of *fellowship* with our veteran members - family & friends with our BBQ!

We already know from the past 15 years - we all work extremely hard setting up and preparing for our *premier event* Memorial Day... and many other community events throughout the year. This is our time... After our Memorial Day Ceremonies "*to reflect on the true meaning of Memorial Day*" as we view the beautiful **All Wars Memorial**. Members are asked to once again join in the "work party" and participate in the tear-down and clean up! Then we hope everyone joins-in & brings side dishes to share for our *Family & Members Annual BBQ Picnic* afterwards... and PARTY! This will be our third year we celebrate together continuing our tradition afterwards in our **Picnic**.

It is time for members and their families to relax and reflect... and to pay tribute - our deep respect and honor to our fallen comrades... those who have gone before us.

Freedom is Not Free!

BBQ MEAT at PICNIC

Freedom is not Free... and neither is - the Beef and Chicken our VNVDV **Chef Mike McDaniel & company**... cooks-up each year for all of our members and guests. President Del Loewe has announced - If you would like to **make "a donation"** to the VNVDV "*special fund*" to off-set & support the cost of the BBQ meats - Please make your "donation check" payable to the VNVDV - or if you prefer a "cash" donation... **our Treasurer Marty De Venuta will collect ALL funds.** Many THANKS to **Mike & Carol McDaniel** for setting up the cooking each year.

ICE it all down!

As a reminder... Don't forget your **ICE & ICE Chest** for your foods to share & beverages! Also - please remember to keep food items "to share" **ON ICE**... to prevent spoilage. Also - bring a folding chair & table if you desire. See you the 28th!

Memorial Day is for Remembering ...

MEMORIAL DAY... Never forget and to always remember America's War Dead... to remember... and honor all the military members **who paid the ultimate price** - Serving our Nation proudly in the U. S. Armed Forces... providing the FREEDOM we all enjoy! It is not just a "three-day weekend" - it is time to remember and pay tribute and honor those who gave us what we all enjoy - the FREEDOM of... *living in the USA! We remember the military members who have gone before us... making AMERICA what it is today! We will always remember!*

Memorial Day ceremony this year will once again be special in several ways. The ceremony will follow fairly closely with the previous years... **Honoring all those who have served our nation and gone before us.** We will always remember the sacrifice they and their families made during the time of their military service to our grateful nation. This is one of the reasons for constructing the beautiful **All Wars Memorial** in **Oakhill Park** located in Danville on Sycamore Valley Road and the site of our annual Memorial Day Ceremonies. The entire East Bay is welcome since this is the largest celebration of Memorial Day in the East Bay and is conducted annually by the **VietNam Veterans of Diablo Valley** with the support of the **Town of Danville** and other sister cities throughout the Diablo and Tri-Valley area. The program will be on Monday - May 28th with music starting at 10AM and the official program will begin shortly after.

The program is "Open to the Public" and in addition to the military guests... this year we are fortunate to have many "Blue Star Moms" present... and we will be entertained by the "Singing Blue Star Moms of the USS Hornet" performing famous songs of the Andrew Sisters - and many other military favorites. Mike Conklin, founder of the Sentinels of Freedom will speak about this local Diablo Valley program... which has gone National! The program will be great for school children and adults alike. The beautiful and important history of our nation is depicted in the "liberty panels" along the walkway wall of the **All Wars Memorial** in Oakhill Park. Many very famous quotes are engraved in the memorial which should be viewed by young and old alike! During the Memorial Day Ceremonies you will be able to view the two large granite boulders at the top... near the Healing Circle of the Memorial. Each of these boulders are inscribed with two very famous Lincoln quotation. The first will be from his second inaugural, while the second will be an excerpt from a letter he wrote to a mother who lost 5 sons during the Civil War. Take time to share these with your children and grandchildren along with the many historical scenes on the liberty panels.

We would appreciate your help to inform anyone you can of the significance of this special day set aside to honor and remember those who paid the ultimate price for freedom serving in the United States Military... **Memorial Day is their day.** The **VietNam Veterans of Diablo Valley** are extremely proud to Honor our these heroes at the annual Memorial Day Ceremonies. This years event is hosted by the VNVDV - The ALL WARS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION and The TOWN of DANVILLE. It will be very special indeed. Memorial Day is special and hopefully the children of today are learning the real meaning and remembering the sacrifices made by so many to make our country free and safe. Please join us...

We look forward to everyone's participation and attendance on Monday - May 28th with music at 10:30.

Thank You... **Bill Picton** - Memorial Day Chair 2007

History of Memorial Day

Continued from Page One...

By the late 1800s, many communities across the country had begun to celebrate Memorial Day and, after World War I, observances also began... **to honor those who had died in all of America's wars.**

In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a national holiday to be celebrated the last Monday in May. **(Veterans Day, a day set aside to honor all veterans, living and dead, is celebrated each year on November 11.)**

Today, Memorial Day is celebrated at Arlington National Cemetery with a ceremony in which a small American flag is placed on each grave. Also, it is customary for the president or vice-president to give a speech honoring the contributions of the dead and lay a wreath at the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*. About 5,000 people attend the ceremony annually. Please join us at Oakhill Park on Monday- May 28th to "Honor America's Military Heroes.