

# 'Parade That Never Was' today

• Tribute to veterans, A4

"The Parade That Never Was," is being held in Kalamazoo this afternoon as a belated tribute to American's Vietnam veterans, a decade after the last of them returned home.

Between 4,000 and 5,000 residents of southwestern Michigan were expected to attend the parade, which honors all veterans while singling out those who fought in Southeast Asia, organizer Thomas Emig said.

"Everyone has been helpful, and it should be a very special, touching tribute," said Emig, himself a Vietnam veteran.

"We've been getting calls from Iowa, Illinois, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York City, and

been interviewed in several cities. The response has just been amazing."

Emig and his wife, Janice, organized the parade along with Jerry DeRyke, president of the Kalamazoo chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America. Units that have promised to participate include VVA chapters from Detroit, Army Reserve medics, members of the U.S. Army 101st Airborne Division and the Army's Indianapolis-based 74th Marching Band.

"They're considered one of the best," Emig said.

A jet flyover and a squadron of Army helicopters from Holland were to signal the start of the parade. Veterans and spectators have been in-

vised to Bronson Park afterward to hear local bands and speakers.

The parade is to kick off at 2 p.m. from the Upjohn Co. parking lot at the corner of Portage and Lovell streets, then proceed west on Lovell to Park Street, turn north to Michigan Avenue, then east to Portage Street.

Emig said there were many factors in the enthusiastic response to the parade, "but most of all, I think it was just something that everyone had inside them for the last 10 years ... not honoring our Vietnam vets."

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The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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