

CDC honors ex-Salinas-area pastor Feske

He is one of seven to receive 'Steps Community Heroes Award'

By ROBERT SALONGA The Salinas Californian

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Ken Feske, a former Salinas-area pastor who now directs his energy toward a multitude of community improvement projects, has been recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for his work to promote healthy lifestyles in the region.

Feske is one of seven inaugural recipients of the "Steps Community Heroes Award," given to participants in the CDC's Steps to a HealthierUS program, which targets 40 nationwide communities with health professional shortages and promotes education about preventable conditions such as Type 2 diabetes and obesity.

He was honored for his work as co-chairman of the Council for a Healthier Salinas, the local offshoot of the Steps program, and prior related work, including instituting a wellness program at First Baptist Church in Salinas. Feske led the church for 17 years before stepping down last fall to engage in broader community work.

Speaking from a national Steps workshop in Seattle, he sought to deflect attention from himself to the many community groups that also fuel the program.

"This is the most humbling thing," Feske said. "I still don't know why I was singled out, because there were a lot of people involved (in Steps)."

The strength of the Steps program, he said, is that it generally advocates moderate, rather than drastic, lifestyle changes, such as cutting excessive fats and sugars from people's diets and more physical activity.

"It's not that major," Feske said. "It's just about discipline."
