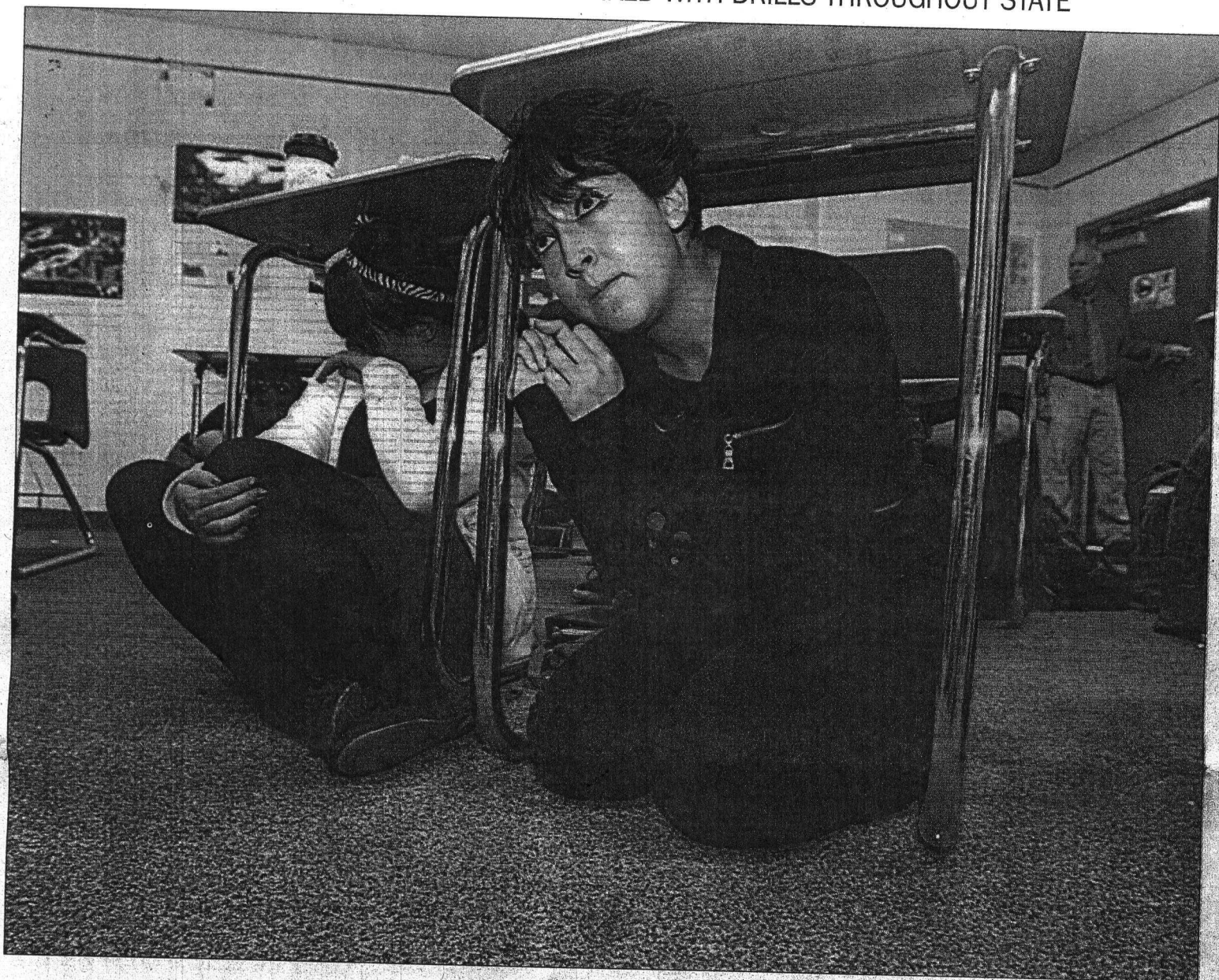


THE GREAT CALIFORNIA SHAKEOUT

Earthquake preparedness event rolls through county

GREAT CALIFORNIA SHAKEOUT MARKED WITH DRILLS THROUGHOUT STATE



Emilee Gardner and Michelle Hatjes huddle under their desks in Travis Parker's U.S. history class at Cypress Charter High School on Thursday morning during the statewide quake drill. DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Earthquakes
By CATHY KELLY
ckelly@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — The Great California ShakeOut struck here Thursday morning, sending a rumble of earthquake-preparedness awareness through the county and state.

Organizers said 6.9 million Californians had registered to participate in earthquake preparedness drills and other activities at the ShakeOut hour of 10:15 a.m., including 21,173 from Santa Cruz County.

The aim was to practice how to protect oneself during earthquakes, and to get prepared at work, school and home.

Earthquake drills and other events marking the ShakeOut were planned at schools and businesses throughout

the state.

The ShakeOut movement began last year in Southern California and was expanded to the entire state this year. It was triggered last year in part by U.S. Geological Survey's development of a "scientific scenario" of what people could realistically expect from a magnitude 7.8 quake in the southern part of the San Andreas Fault, agency spokeswoman Leslie Gordon said.

Everything then just kind of converged, she said, with a number of agencies deciding to make it an annual disaster preparedness event.

It is particularly poignant given Saturday's 20th anniversary of the devastating Loma Prieta quake, and comes during a week of several coun-

COMING SATURDAY: AFTERSHOCKS

Twenty years ago Saturday, everything was rearranged. People died. Buildings collapsed. Homes crumbled. Lives were forever changed. Sentinel photographers and reporters recount the earth-shattering events of the Loma Prieta earthquake — a moment in time that is still reverberating.

SEE QUAKE ON A9



QUAKE

Continued from **A1**

ty activities marking that anniversary, many of them scheduled for this weekend.

Participants on Thursday included Community Emergency Response Team members organized and trained by Aptos/La Selva Fire, Central Fire and others. So-called CERT members are trained to provide certain disaster-response services in their communities should the need arise.

The city of Watsonville had more than 100 people participate in a ShakeOut drill, Watsonville Fire Capt. Kirt Vojvodaa said, while a Watsonville business called Terminal Freezers did a quick duck-and-cover with its 25 employees at the company's designated evacuation spot, Com-

pliance Director Michelle Orlando said.

"Everybody seemed to enjoy it," she said. "Just being repetitive with it helps reinforce what to do in case of a big one."

At one of at least 30 county schools to participate, students at Cypress Charter High School in Live Oak certainly "knew the drill," and participated with little resistance and only a bit of commentary, though some struggled to fit under the desks and sat with crossed knees reaching their chins in a history class.

And while some questioned the use of class time, others said the more practice they get, the more likely they are to remember during an emergency when panic becomes part of the problem.

Stephany Mendoza, 17, said she helped out at her 4-year-old sister's preschool that morning and

that it seemed like a good thing to tell little Marlene and the other youngsters to "drop, roll and cover their head and heart," as well as to hold onto something, if a quake should strike.

Stephen Schaupp, 17, of Corralitos said that though they are "pretty well-aware" of what they should do, students should continue to practice the drills, so that no one is singled out or left out. His carpool friend, Theo Olson of Corralitos, said the drills had kind of been "pounded into their heads" by high school, but he cited the panic factor as a reason it seemed fine to him.

In the school office, Principal Les Forster was preparing for the milk shakes — note the "shake" for pun purposes — that would be served to sophomores due to their stellar attendance.

"It went great; it's important," he said.