

Corralitos buildings are heavily damaged

BY KATHARINE BALL
STAFF WRITER

Structures in Corralitos sustained major damage in yesterday's quake, as did the bridge over Corralitos Creek on Browns Valley Road.

A house at 325 Browns Valley Road burned to the ground in a post-quake fire.

This morning, residents were cleaning up homes where the entire contents of cupboards and refrigerators had been spilled and furniture tumbled.

Others were taking stock of fallen chimneys, large foundation cracks and holes knocked clear through exterior walls.

On Browns Valley Road near the Corralitos Market, Ken Rodgers, 32, was still reliving his experiences of the previous evening.

Rodgers was on the Pacific Garden Mall in Santa Cruz when the quake struck. He was among many bystanders who frantically tried to dig out a woman trapped in the rubble of Ford's department store there.

By the time rescuers got to her, she was dead. "She was just crushed," Rodgers said.

He had run to his car to get a high-lift jack, which is used to lift heavy timbers in the store wreckage.

With each of the frequent after-

shocks, he said, a wall, now free-standing, would sway threateningly.

"I was real jittery with those aftershocks for the rest of the evening," he said.

He returned home to find the contents of his house tumbled about as if they had been diced in a giant shaker.

"I think this is worse than the flood (in 1982)," Rodgers said. "The flood was localized. Now, everyone is out in one shape or form."

The facade of the Corralitos market is teetering dangerously, said market owner Joe Cutler.

"The world-famous parapet with the bells is like this," said Cutler, undulating his hands back and forth.

Cracks in the parapet are visible from outside the store.

The store was not open today, since most of its merchandise was scattered across the floor. Inside, the market was permeated with a pungent odor combined of smoked meat, relish, vinegar and cleanser, among other things.

Bruce and Gail Gardner and their two children were out surveying the damage in their neighborhood near the store.

Surveying the damage, Bruce Gardner ruminated. "The funny thing about it is, is this the Big One?" he asked. "We don't really know."

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