

Aptos pair honored by chamber

By KEITH MURAOKA
Sentinel staff writer

APTOS — Once-postponed by the Oct. 17 earthquake, the Aptos Chamber of Commerce got back to business Tuesday night in another earth-moving way.

A crowd of about 200 jammed Aptos Seascap Golf Lodge to honor long-time Aptos movers and shakers John Hibble and Helen Cheney as the chamber's man and woman of the year, respectively. Cabrillo College, celebrating 30 years in the education business, was named the organization of the year.

The crowd rose as one to pay homage to Hibble, whose life has revolved around the chamber since 1981 when he opened Stained Glass Overlay Designs. Hibble co-manages the chamber with his wife, Karen. He served as chamber president in 1984.

Under their leadership, the 61-year-old chamber has expanded from 75 businesses to more than 375 today.

John has become immersed in a number of other activities as well. He has served on such diverse subjects as a tree pitch-canker disease task force and an Animal Control license-promotion project. He currently serves on the Leadership Santa Cruz County Advisory Council, and helped organize neighboring Capitola's annual Art and Wine Festival.

Long-time chamber director Chuck Holcomb presented the plaque, calling Hibble, "Mr. Aptos."

Hibble noted, "Aptos is a pretty place, and working with the chamber is one of the best jobs there is."

Cheney, the first woman president of the Seacliff Improvement Association, was honored for her more than 25 years of service in that organization and to Aptos. She was elected the 300-family improvement association's first woman president in 1987, and is active in the Council of Improvement Association, which represents Aptos' six improvement groups.

Cheney, who is editor of the organization's newsletter, also finds time for gardening. She is editor of the Aptos Garden Club's bulletin.



Helen Cheney

She also is active in the Monterey Bay Natural History Association, and her church's choir and social action program.

Chamber Director Dick Jamison presented Cheney her plaque. Cheney accepted the award on one condition. "That it be shared by all the volunteers, who make this a better community to live in," she said.

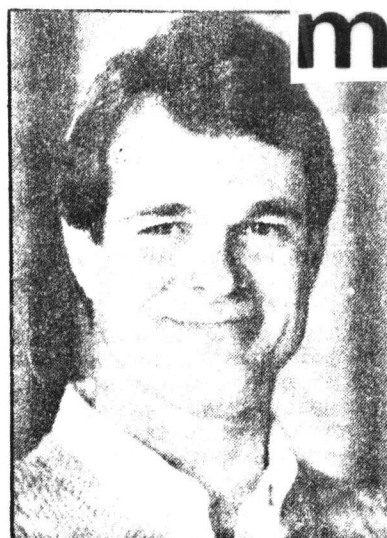
Cabrillo College, the organization of the year, is now in its 30th year. It has an enrollment of more than 13,000, with a full-time faculty of 200 and a part-time faculty of 175.

That's a long way from its original 15-member faculty that began teaching classes in the old Watsonville High School building in 1959. Hula hoops were the fad then, and Alaska and Hawaii had just been admitted as states.

Today, the community college encompasses 150 acres in Aptos. Enrollment since its inception is greater than Santa Cruz County's entire population.

Accepting the award from outgoing chamber president Mark Adams was Helen Palmer, president of the Cabrillo Board. Palmer noted, "Cabrillo College is the community. All you people helped make it what it is."

The three top award-winners also received proclamations from Sen.



John Hibble

Henry Mello, Assemblyman Sam Farr and Aptos Supervisor Robley Levy.

Long-time chamber members Frank and Ginny Booz were awarded chamber couple of the year. Other awards were presented to chamber directors Holcomb and Jamison, co-chairpersons of the chamber's community enhancement committee. Tim Welch, Joe Appenrodt, Alyce Shepardson and

Karen Miranda also received awards for their work with the chamber.

Special earthquake awards were presented to those businesses and individuals helping after the Oct. 17 earthquake. They included: PG&E, Aptos/La Selva Beach Fire District, KSCO Radio, Wells Fargo Bank, John Fisher and Holcomb.

Chamber President Adams, presiding over his last meeting, gave way to incoming president Bob Bailey, president of his own real estate and property management company. Bailey presented Adams, principal of Aptos High School, with an engraved beer mug in appreciation of his work.

New officers include Mark Hucklebridge, Santa Cruz SPCA, vice president; Pam Zamani, Coast Commercial Bank, treasurer; and Dian Forster, ERA Ponderosa Properties, secretary.