

# Santa Cruz County

## Scotts Valley incorporation no easy job

By Don Wilson  
-Staff Writer

SCOTTS VALLEY — "Nature has endowed this community with some of the world's greatest scenery and most salubrious climate, and the people residing in this community desire to perpetuate these conditions by an act of incorporation," said the Scotts Valley City Council in its first resolution on Aug. 2, 1966.

Mayor Bill Graham declared a four-day period of celebration "for such parades, games and rejoicing that will attract the world's attention and bring honor to the name of the City of Scotts Valley, State of California."

It hadn't been an easy job — nor a short one — to bring the new city to that point.

Murmurs of discontent had been rumbling through the scattered rural area around "Camp Evers" at the intersection of Mount Hermon Road and Scotts Valley Drive for some time.

There were proposals in 1958 for creating a community services district, which would have given a locally-elected board the power to handle such things as water and sewer problems — but the proposals were refused by the board of supervisors.

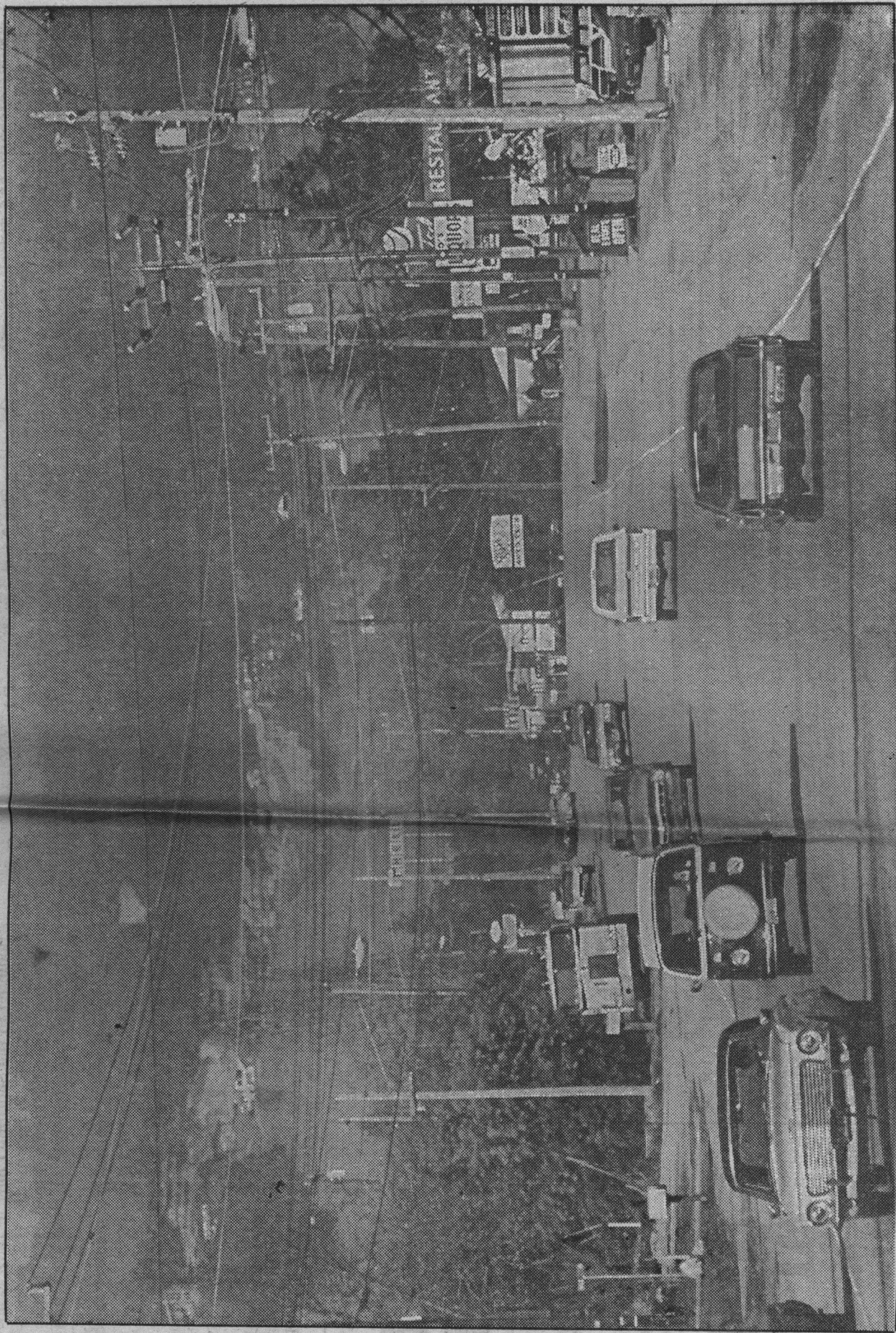
It was in 1962 that people in the Scotts Valley area began to murmur more loudly about controlling their own development, fighting off what appeared to be attempts by the City of Santa Cruz to annex the area and rising up against actions by the county board of supervisors which residents of the area saw as inimical to their best interests.

Among the last straws was the county board's approval of a memorial cemetery in Scotts Valley over the vigorous protests of many of its residents.

Nearly two dozen members of the Scotts Valley Property Owners Association and the Greater Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce met to talk about incorporation. They named a committee. The meeting had followed a public forum just a few days earlier, attended by some 250 persons. It was reported that two thirds of them wanted a study made of incorporating the area as a city.

It took nearly a year for the study to progress far enough to convince people that incorporation really was feasible. In February 1963, a petition was filed with the county clerk's office, calling for an incorporation election.

The proposed city would have covered 10



John R. Fulton Jr. — Mercury

Scotts Valley Drive overlooks some of the "world's greatest scenery"

backs," and a good representative on that board could do more for Scotts Valley than a multi-person city council could.

Election day came on April 14, 1964

square miles and have some 4,000 residents.

The board of supervisors held a hearing on the proposed incorporation — and cut out nearly two-thirds of the area after hearing vigorous protests from people who owned property around the edges of the proposed city. Among the parts which the board deleted were the controversial cemetery and Skypark Airport — which was (and still is) owned by the City of Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz later annexed the airport, leaving it an island in the City of Scotts Valley.

The deletion of the proposed cemetery left proponents of the new city disappointed and frustrated. With the cemetery outside the city

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The official vote was 324 to 316 — a scant eight votes in favor of incorporation.

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limits, and therefore outside the jurisdiction of the proposed new city, one of the major reasons for incorporation had disappeared.

The issue of incorporation already had been a touchy one in the area. With the cemetery reason gone, that left the people almost evenly divided on incorporation.

By the time the matter got to election day, it was April 14, 1964 — two years after the study meetings began.

Right up to election day, the campaign was a vigorous one. Proponents talked of local control to keep the area rural or aim its development in the way that local residents wanted it to go; protection from annexation efforts by the City of Santa Cruz; financial independence without taxes (the city was designed to function on state funding, mostly; it was not until 1975 that a property tax was instituted); better financing for home and business development, as well as for roads and sewers.

Opposition came from the newly-reactivated Scotts Valley Improvement Association. Members argued that the proposed city didn't have enough tax base, or industry, to support itself without a burden on the homeowner. They argued that prospects for getting new roads and sewers at less cost as a city than as an unincorporated area were virtually nil. They also argued that members of the board of supervisors were known to "scratch each others'

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## Inside:

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### Dilemma of disability judges

Each year some \$12.5 billion in disability benefits is paid out by the Social Security Administration to 5 million claimants. Yet such is the pressure on administrative judges to settle disability claims as quickly and cheaply as possible that there is no way of telling whether the money is going to those who deserve it, reports columnist Jack Anderson.

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Scotts Valley people voted 344-323 for incorporation.

The election was challenged immediately. It was charged that people outside the proposed city boundaries had voted. A Superior Court judge determined that 27 people had voted illegally. When questioned, 13 of them said they had voted for incorporation; the other 14 refused to say how they had voted.

Judge Gilbert Perry simply split the 14 votes and gave half to each side, then subtracted the 20 illegal votes for incorporation and the seven illegal votes against it.

That made the official vote 324-316 — a scant eight votes in favor of incorporation.

Judge Perry's decision was taken to the appellate court — which upheld his decision. County Clerk Tom Kelley waited 20 days to see if anybody would appeal to the state Supreme Court.

Nobody did.

So Kelley on Aug. 1, 1966, signed a resolution saying the city had been incorporated.

Soon-to-be-city administrator Friend Stone drove the papers to Sacramento and returned with cityhood in his hands.

Officially a city on Aug. 2, Scotts Valley immediately had a problem: The fiscal year already had started and the city didn't have any way to raise money. So the newly-elected city council borrowed \$20,000 from the bank.

The first official act was to get enough people on the council. In the election, Bill Graham, M.W. Lotts, C.R. Roberson, Dave Alford and Ken Stacey were elected. But during the two-year

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hiatus, Alford moved away and Stacey moved into the Pasatiempo Pines area in the mistaken idea that it was within the new city limits. It wasn't, so he couldn't sit on the council.

Paul Couchman and Jim Kennedy were appointed by the three councilmen to join them in the vacant seats.

Stone was named clerk and secretary to the council; Sheriff Douglas James was named police chief in the interim before the city could have funds for its own chief; the late Agnes Lewis was named city treasurer.

For several months, the county continued to provide services to the new city until its own funds could start coming in.

In the ensuing 15 years, the city has grown in population from its original 3,678 to 6,425 — partly through people moving into the city and partly through the city's moving out to them through annexations.

A property tax was imposed for the first time in 1975.

Stone resigned as city administrator (and later became a city councilman). A job of city manager was created and filled. City voters decided they liked the old system better and rejected the city manager form of government. So the city has a chief administrator again.

One thing that hasn't changed much: sewer



Mercury

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Arnold of Scotts Valley stroll through their community

problems. The city has an inadequate sewage disposal system, and there is a dispute with the city of Santa Cruz over who is going to pay for handling the sewage that the Scotts Valley plant can't handle.

And there still are street problems. A proposed \$1.4 million project for widening and improving Scotts Valley Drive was dumped recently by the protests of people who would have been assessed for the construction costs.

And Skypark Airport. Owned by the City of

Santa Cruz, it still sits as an island in Scotts Valley. Santa Cruz is studying its own need for an airport, and whether Scotts Valley is the place for it if one is needed.

And one other thing hasn't changed since Mayor Bill Graham issued his proclamation as the first resolution of the new city council nearly 13 years ago: "Nature has endowed this community with some of the world's greatest scenery and most salubrious climate."

Celebration of that historic day takes place here every August during "Scotts Valley Days."