

# Community Shocked By Slayings

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A "very depressed" and "shocked" Santa Cruz community today pondered over the Monday night mass slayings of Dr. Victor Ohta, his wife, two children and secretary.

His colleagues recognized him as a most competent eye specialist, his patients admired him and the man-on-the-street who did not know him expressed

grief at the incident.

Dr. Louis Wileman, president of the Medical Plaza Association of which Dr. Ohta was a member, said the doctor was "a perfectionist in everything he did."

"Never once did I ever hear him speak an angry word to anybody. He was a compassionate, non-violent type of person."

Dr. Wileman added Dr. Ohta

was "an expert at using his hands," adding that in his hobbies that included gardening and woodwork, Dr. Ohta would work at something until completely satisfied, or else start over again.

He added that Dr. Ohta was "a family man in every sense of the word." He said the main reason he had such a beautiful home was that "he spent most of his time at home,"

working on it himself.

"Dr. Ohta was always friendly and always generous to give to charitable organizations," Dr. Wileman said. "All of us in the community will miss the Ohta family."

Many of the patients Dr. Ohta served said they owed their sight to him.

At a meeting in Ben Lomond Tuesday, Leo Lemon, Ben Lomond recreation park custodian

said, "If it wasn't for the doctor (Ohta), I wouldn't have my eyesight today."

Duane Weber, lessee of an Aptos service station, recalled that about five years ago a tire blew up in his face while inflating a tube.

"Everything turned black," Weber said. "The first doctor that observed me said there wasn't much hope I would see

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again. But Dr. Ohta was called, and because of his diagnosis, I was able to see again."

A blind university student from Southern California called The Sentinel Tuesday to deliver his appraisal of Dr. Ohta.

In an emotion-choked voice, Dennis Holter, 1969 Soquel High School student body president, said he was "dazed and shock-

ed" at the news of Ohta's death, and that he will probably fly here for the funeral.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Boles of Ben Lomond, Holter came to know Ohta through the doctor's futile attempt to save Holter's vision from the disease glaucoma. Dr. Ohta performed two eye operations as recently as two months ago on Holter.

"We became close friends.

Santa Cruz County will miss him, because there is no way to replace him as a man," Holter said.

Ray Negro, Soquel Fire chief, said it was recognized that Ohta's were well-to-do, but they always had plenty of time to talk with and help people. They were humble people, always ready to assist if necessary."

City and county officials also expressed their concern over the situation.

Said Santa Cruz Mayor Ernest Wicklund, "I find this shocking. I know Dr. and Mrs. Ohta as very kind, gentle and wonderful people. It's difficult to comprehend that such an act could happen in our community area, or anywhere else."

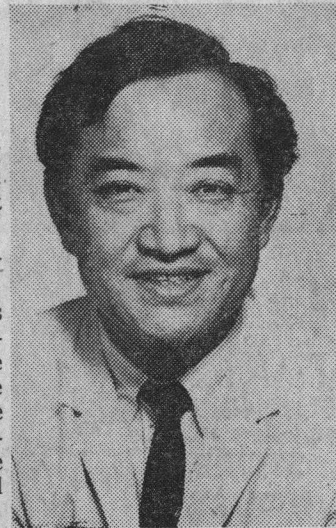
John Lappin, Capitola city councilman, added, "When something like this happens this close to home, it's like a nightmare. There isn't any reason for such and unjust and illogical act. It only happens far away, not in your own back

yard. The most tragic thing now is that people here must live with realistic fears that this can happen to them."

As area citizens were sorrowed, they were also terrified.

A check of local gun stores Tuesday revealed a definite increase in gun sales. One store reported a sales jump of "more than 500 per cent," from one or two to 10 or 12, and another said he noticed an increase of 300 per cent "over a normal Tuesday."

All those merchants reporting an increase said it was "definitely due to the Ohta killings."



Dr. Victor M. Ohta

## Three Sought In Slaying

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near Nichols Road.

Sheriff's deputies rushed to

first report was received until the report came in from the railroad.

from Sacramento were to examine the car.

Police theorize the suspects drove the vehicle from the Bon-