

Money is pouring in for disaster relief

Earthquake 1989 - Santa Cruz County

By KEITH MURAOKA

Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — It doesn't matter who you give to for earthquake disaster relief, just give.

That's the sentiment among officials from a number of organizations who are helping victims from Tuesday's earthquake. Help is coming from organizations, such as the American Red Cross and Salvation Army, as well as private businesses like Wells Fargo Bank, which has donated \$1 million for Northern California, and Pacific Western Bank, which is giving away a total of \$100,000 in small grants to Santa Cruz-area earthquake victims.

Even residents of tiny Myrtle Beach, S.C., hit hard by Hurricane Hugo last month, are organizing a fund-raising drive, under the direction of Mayor Bob Grissom.

One unidentified Santa Cruz man reportedly donated \$100,000 to the Red Cross, while someone else gave \$20,000 to the Salvation Army. The United Way of Santa Cruz County took \$30,000 from its reserve for earthquake disaster relief, and will have a special 900 number during telecasts of the World Series for those wishing to make donations (1-900-503-FUND). The Sentinel and

its parent company — Ottaway Newspapers, Inc., a subsidiary of Dow Jones & Co. Inc. — are matching \$5,000 apiece to the Red Cross.

And then, there are the individual stories of giving.

A reporter from a South Carolina newspaper coordinated an effort to get 20 portable generators flown to Moffett Field in Sunnyvale which, in turn, were transported to Santa Cruz by Salvation Army trucks, said Virginia Marler, a case worker for the Santa Cruz Chapter of the Salvation Army.

"Somebody thought to donate a bunch of stuffed animals," Marler said. "You should have seen the looks on the children's faces when they saw them. They hugged them. It was as if they found a lost friend."

Lt. Willdonna Ptack of the Salvation Army in Watsonville said, "One man donated water. Lots and lots of water, which we desperately needed at that time."

"It's just been overwhelming," added Liz Riehl, a volunteer with the Santa Cruz chapter of the Red Cross. "People are just walking off the streets volunteering to help. This place is just flooded with cars. We have people directing traffic in

the street."

Joey Arias, a 17-year-old Watsonville High School student, was volunteering at the Watsonville chapter of the Red Cross. "Our house is a mess, it's not very liveable," she said. "But my Mom told me to come here and do something."

"A lot of people are calling in wanting to give money or help," Arias said. "It sort of makes you cry."

Those donations — whether it's food, water, clothing, household goods or camping supplies — are desperately needed. The Red Cross is housing more than 1,300 people in seven county shelters, and are serving some 4,000 meals a day. And, that doesn't even include the dozens of "tent cities" that have popped up throughout the county.

"There are still a lot of people who are afraid of aftershocks and don't want to be inside," said Red Cross spokeswoman Jayne Nakayama, who was working Saturday at the shelter at the National Guard Armory in Watsonville.

Various officials stressed that they are still in dire need of cash donations so they may buy those supplies that are needed immediately.

Sentinel Publisher Fred McPherson III said that is precisely why \$10,000 is being donated by the paper. "Government monies often are tied up and delayed in red tape," he said. "This money will get to the people who need it, right away, which is vitally important."

Lois Rice, executive vice president and manager of Wells Fargo Bank's Central California division, agreed. "We're part of the communities hardest hit by the quake and want to do our share to get them back on track as quickly as possible."

Wells Fargo Community Relief Fund is also administering grants ranging from \$500-\$50,000 to non-profit groups and municipalities, such as libraries, schools, hospitals, parks and child-care centers.

Pacific Western Bank, which has 11 branches in Santa Cruz County, is giving away \$100,000 in small grants, said Chief Executive Officer Phil Boyce Saturday. Applications can be picked up at branches beginning Tuesday, with monies expected to be distributed soon after.

"These are not loans," Boyce said. "We're looking at giving small amounts of money to as many people as we can to help them get over the top in this emergency."

Pacific Western is also serving as an accounting agency for the American Red Cross, with contributions being accepted at P.O. Box 58000, Santa Clara, Calif., 95052. The bank has established memorial funds for Robin Ortiz (account number 10408318) and Dale DeBenedetti (account number 10408359), local residents killed in the earthquake. Donations may be brought to any branch.

Donations are being funneled through a number of local organizations. Those wishing to donate monies that will go directly to local victims may send checks to:

- Santa Cruz Chapter of the American Red Cross, 2960 Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz, Calif., 95062. Or, the Watsonville Chapter of the American Red Cross, 351 East Lake Ave., Watsonville, Calif., 95076.

- Salvation Army, Santa Cruz, P.O. Box 640, Santa Cruz, Calif., 95061. Or, the Salvation Army, Watsonville, P.O. Box 588, Watsonville, Calif., 95077.

- United Way of Santa Cruz County, 7000 Soquel Drive, Aptos, Calif., 95003.

- Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County, 1110 Emeline St., Santa Cruz, Calif.

*S.C. Sentinel
Sun. Oct 22, 89*