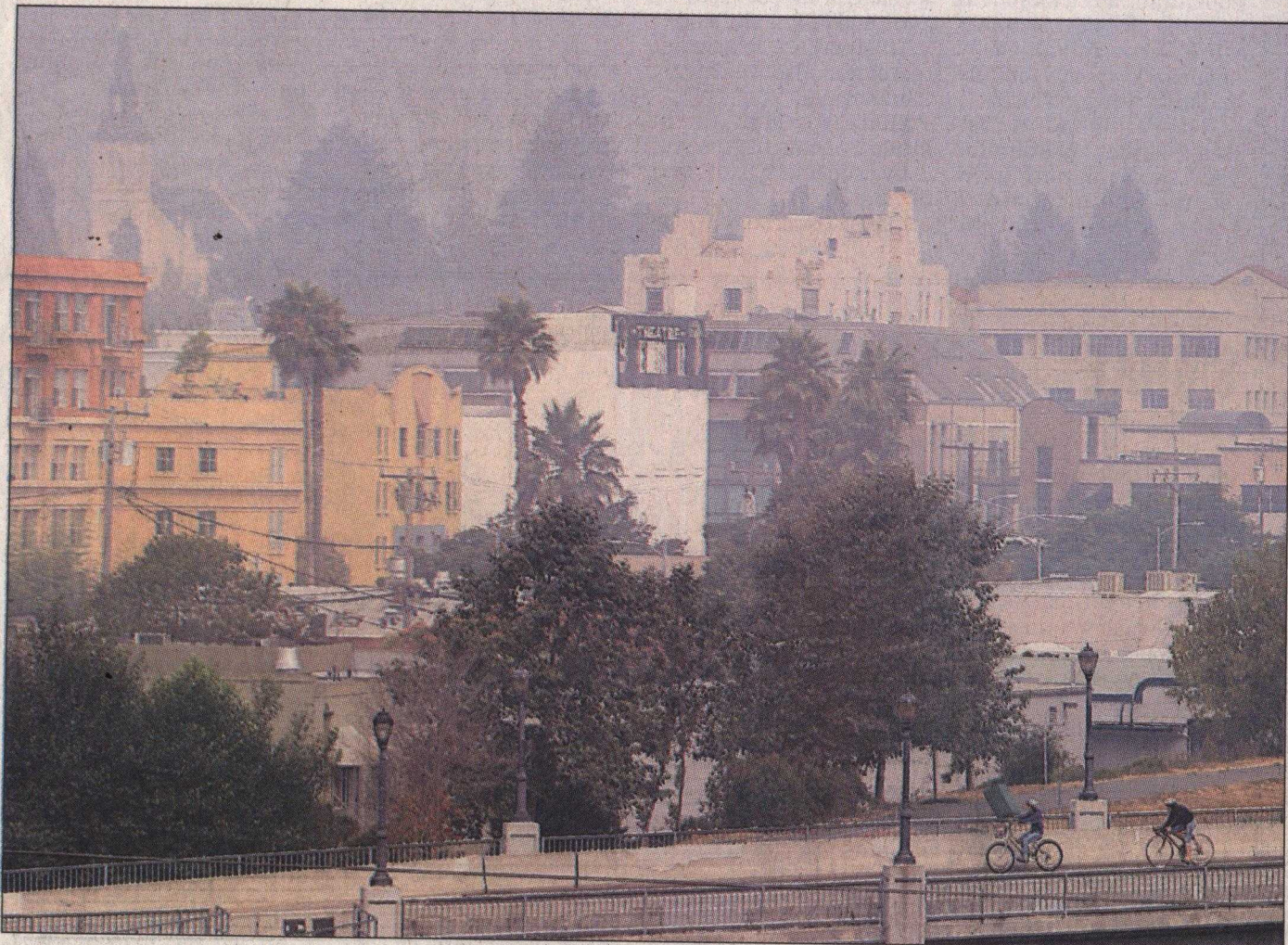


LOCKHEED FIRE

SANTA CRUZ SMOKED OUT

Many stay indoors as smoke from fire continues to spread



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Holy Cross Church's steeple is barely visible at top left as dense smoke from the Lockheed Fire settles on downtown Santa Cruz on Friday morning.

Fire + Fire Protection - 2000

8-22-09

By ALIA WILSON

awilson@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — The Lockheed Fire may be last week's news for those who were not directly affected by the flames, but another impact of the fire is spreading far and wide as Santa Cruz chokes on clouds of smoke from the blaze Friday.

Senior homes kept older folks indoors, high school football practices were cut short and officials warned people to avoid exerting themselves outdoors if possible.

Marilyn Strayer, owner of Alfresco, a vegetarian and vegan kiosk on Pacific Avenue, wore a miniature air purifier around her neck Friday as she helped customers. She bought the purifier last year to help cope with smog from passing cars but said it has been working overtime this week.

"I just keep the air purifier around my neck and it has made breathing a little bit better," Strayer said. "I've also been taking these capsules made from mushrooms to help with my breathing. This morning was really bad. There definitely was less foot traf-

fic over the weekend. If you were a tourist, why wouldn't you just move on to another place?"

Despite the thick cloud of smoke in town during portions of the day, the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District said levels, on average, were moderate Friday, though they did peak at unhealthy levels for sensitive groups in Bonny Doon in the afternoon.

"On average, the smoke concern has been diminishing over the past 24 hours," said district spokesman Richard Stedman. "However we had some areas with high peaks late in the morning and early afternoon. This will probably continue until we have a significant weather change."

Still, the district advised people with heart or lung disease, the elderly, children and pregnant women to limit prolonged exertion and to stay indoors when possible.

Heavy smoke inhalation can make it difficult for clearing mechanisms in the lungs to function normally. Typical defense

SEE SMOKE ON A2



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Pacific Avenue buildings are shrouded in smoke from the Lockheed Fire on Friday morning.

MORE INSIDE

■ Crews mopping up discover 13 structures burned; full containment expected today, B2

SMOKE

Continued from **A1**

mechanisms such as the production of mucus can be hindered, causing inflammation, irritating the nasal passage and eyes and making it difficult to breathe.

Cal Fire officials said the heavy smoke Friday was due in part because fog trapped in smoke that was generated during backfires set Thursday to fight the blaze.

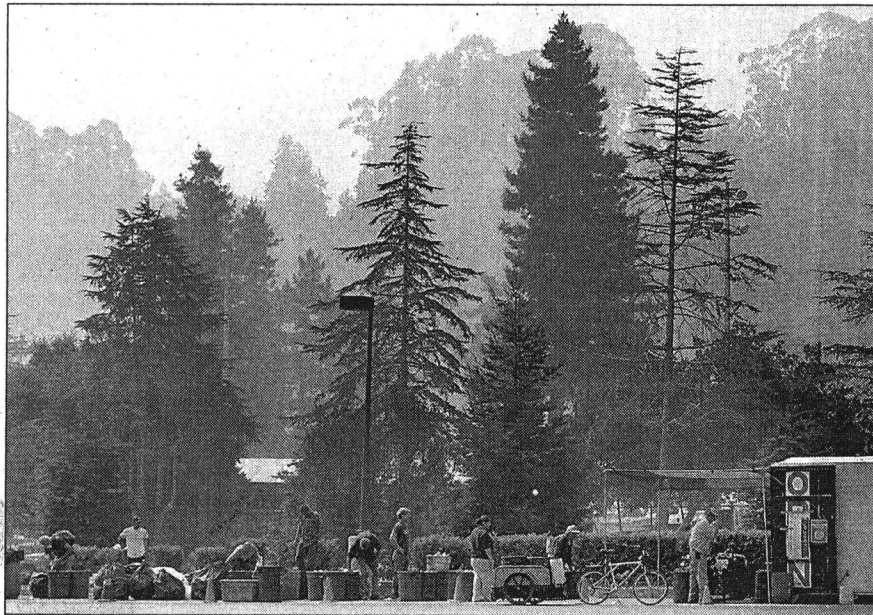
People reacted Friday by staying indoors, keeping doors and windows closed and taking it slow with their day-to-day activities.

Sunshine Villa Assisted Living on Front Street kept elderly residents indoors and closed windows and doors to keep out the smoke Friday. Activities coordinator Stephanie Ortęga said the seniors' daily walking group had to be moved indoors.

"We thought the worst would be over with but it was really bad out there [Friday]," Ortega said. "We've just been making sure the windows stay closed and to turn the air conditioning on when it gets warm."

Growing Years Preschool on Soquel Avenue kept children busy indoors playing games in the multipurpose room to prevent any children from developing breathing problems or irritated eyes.

"We talked to the children about



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Smoke fills the air over Harvey West Park on Friday as recyclers wait to redeem their collections.

it and decided to keep them inside," Director Irene Freiberg said. "We are fortunate to have a big multipurpose room with enough room to play with balls and do other motor types of exercises. We have been keeping an eye on them and they don't seem to be bothered by the smoke."

Harbor High School athletics toned things down Friday, cutting practice short for varsity and junior varsity football players.

"I wouldn't even call it practice. We focused more on mental repetition, walking through plays and lining up defensive and offensive sets," coach Travis Rebbert said. "We stretched and had no conditioning and made sure there was no running. You could tell just looking at the air that it was pretty bad, but when I double checked to see if levels were dangerous and saw that they weren't it felt good just to be erring on the side of caution."