

# Boulder Creek bar will close

## ABC orders owner of Boulder Club to sell liquor license

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**BOULDER CREEK** — A long history of fights and public drunkenness at the Boulder Club has prompted state Alcoholic Beverage Control officials to order the club closed for 45 days, and order owner Frances Gaultier to sell the club's liquor license within six months.

The suspension will begin as soon as official papers are received, probably within 30 days, according to Bill Avey, ABC district supervisor for the counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito.

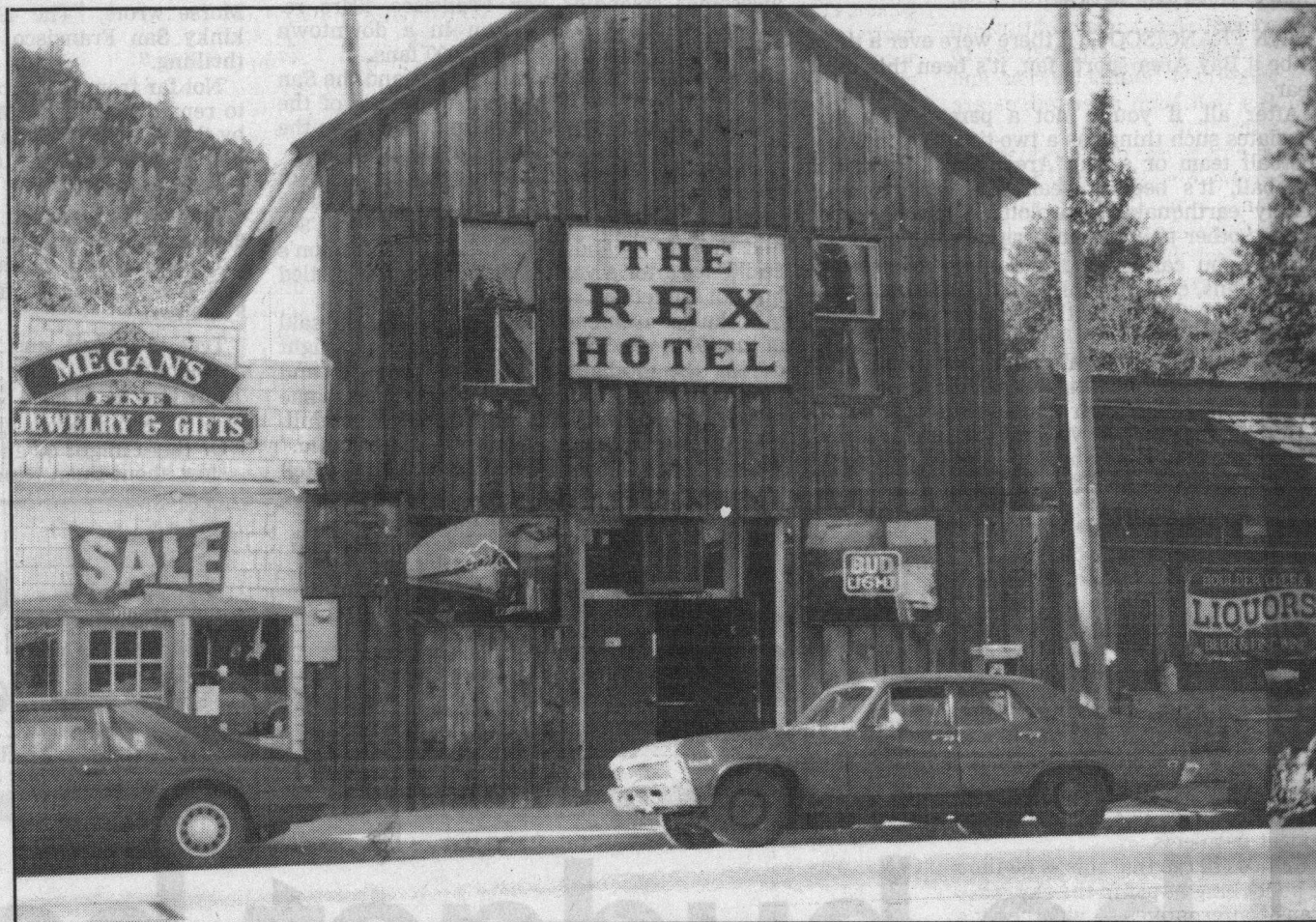
The club remains open for business until then.

Located inside the 106-year old Rex Hotel (rumored to be a bordello in its early years), the Boulder Club earned a reputation as a biker hangout frequently plagued by fights and drunkenness. The ABC file of complaints about the Boulder Club fills "two big folders," Avey said, and Sheriff's deputies made the bar a nightly stop on the Boulder Creek beat.

"We won't actually make them close their doors," Avey said. "But they won't be allowed to sell alcohol for 45 days. It's intended to be a cooling-off period. We're hoping the people who've been hanging around there causing the problems will go somewhere else."

The ABC could have simply revoked the license, Avey said, but officials decided to let Gaultier sell it instead after negotiating with her attorney.

The liquor license, which Avey estimates is worth \$30,000 to \$40,000, must be sold to someone pre-approved by the ABC. The state agency will run com-



The Boulder Club, in the 106-year-old Rex Hotel, has a long history of hard drinking and tough customers.

plete criminal, financial and character checks on potential buyers, and even then area residents will have a chance to testify on whether or not they want another bar to open in the neighborhood.

Gaultier bought the Boulder Club in 1972 with her husband, Jack, who died in April. Gaultier said Monday she

didn't know she was being forced to sell her liquor license, and declined comment on the issue, saying she was too shook up to know what to say.

"Everything's a mess right now," she said. "I haven't been able to live in my house since the earthquake, and now this."

The club's license was suspended for 20 days in 1987 as a warning, but the

warning was apparently not enough, Avey said.

"We tried to get their attention with fines and then the shutdown," he said. "But when things continue to be a problem we're forced to take more severe action."

But the Boulder Club had a warm side as well. The Gaultiers offered free hol-

iday feasts on Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, and the club was a warm refuge for people living on the fringes.

Even while deploring the problems it presented, some Boulder Creek residents will be sad to see the Boulder Club go.

"I think it's a crying shame," said Karin Kipphut, owner of Joe's, across the street from the Boulder Club. "Frances is a nice gal, but she's allowed her employees to walk over her. She's been desperately taken advantage of."

One of Kipphut's customers, a clean-cut man named Red, has lived in Boulder Creek for 35 years.

"I used to go to the Boulder Club, it used to be a workingman's bar," Red said. "Now it's a bunch of bums. But I

still think (Frances) is getting a raw deal."

Joe Coffman, owner of Squisi's Restaurant, wonders where the Boulder Club regulars are going to go.

"They've got to go somewhere," he said. "A lot of those guys have been living here their entire lives."

Coffman predicted that area business owners will have to deal with a new clientele.

"I don't allow that kind of foolishness here," said Kipphut. "They'll try and come in here, and it'll take me a week or two to let 'em know that kind of stuff isn't allowed. I've spent years making this a safe, liveable place, and I'm not giving it up for anybody."