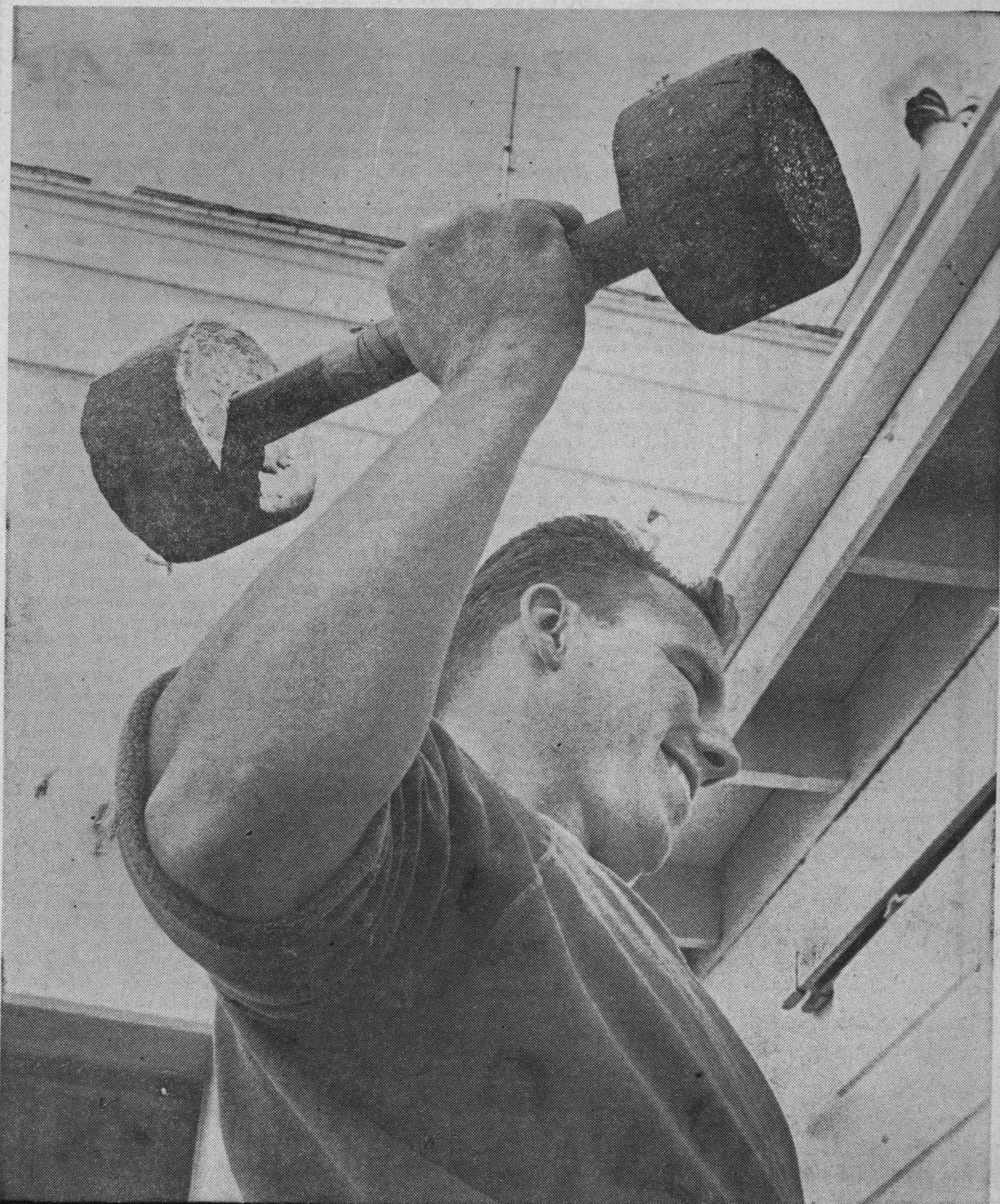


It's Hard Work To Earn . . .



Santa Cruz Sentinel

II Family Interest Section

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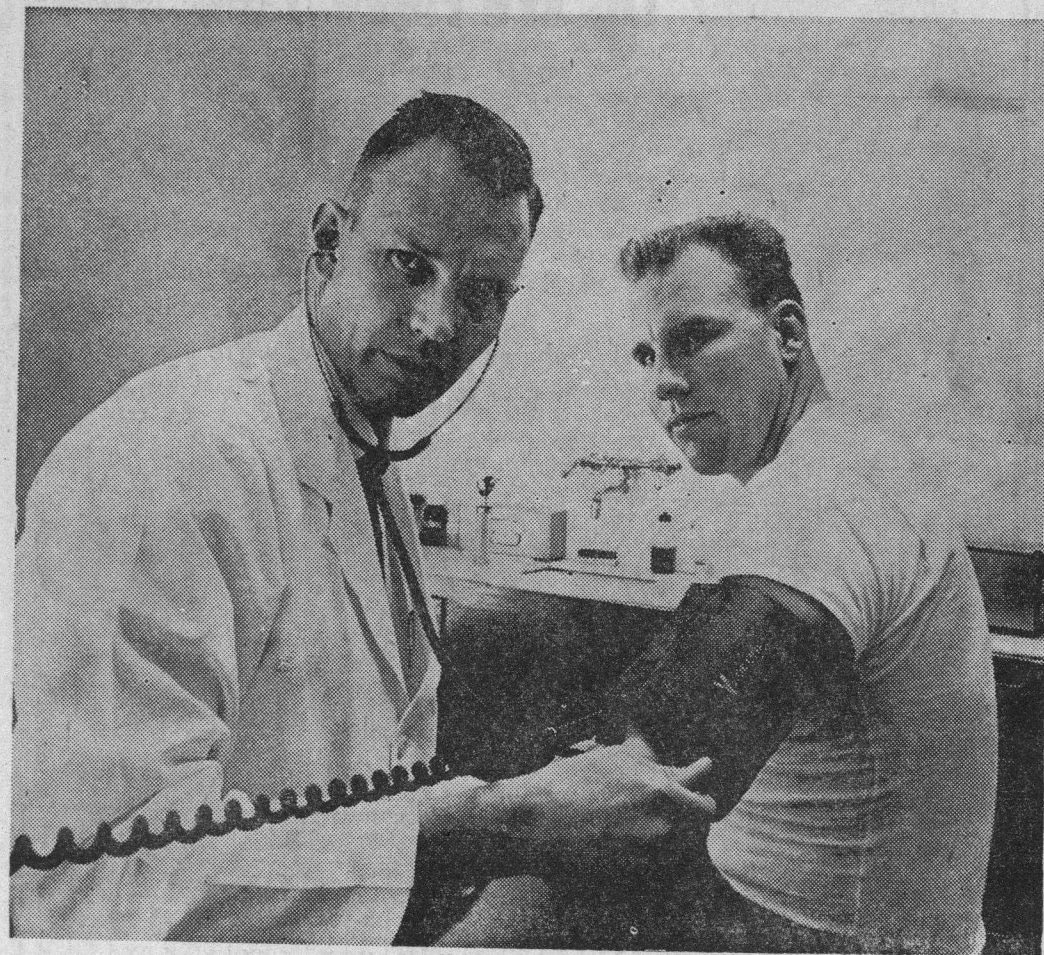
Donald W. Hollen, a new Santa Cruz policeman, is shown in some of the tests which are required before hiring to the force. At left he heists a 50 - pound weight, and above right he broadjumps to prove physical fitness. Mental testing comes at right through a carefully prepared and scored civil service written examination. At lower left Dr. John Morris conducts one phase of a rigid physical check-up. At lower right, after passing the tests and being hired for a probationary period, Hollen kisses his wife, Linda, as he leaves home for work.





Text By
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Photos By
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... A Job On The Force

In the old days, according to the television westerns, a badge was planted on a burly chest and a new police officer was born.

Today, although we're about as far west as we can get and still stay dry, the procedure of choosing a Santa Cruz police officer is long, complicated and exacting. Only about one per cent of the original applicants are hired.

"We go through a lot here before telling some one he has a clean bill of health and he has a job. By that time, he has earned it," says Assistant Police Chief Ernest Marengi.

Santa Cruz is a desirable area for policemen and few leave who have been hired. Marengi said there have been only three voluntary resignations during the past five years.

It all starts with an application, and this is only for persons between the ages of 21 and 35 years who are citizens and have lived in the state for a year. The man must be at least five feet nine inches tall and fit an average weight standard.

Next comes with a written civil service examination which Marengi said is of a "broad scope suited to this kind of work." The exams, prepared in San Francisco, take about two hours to complete and acts as a sort of aptitude and psychological sounding board. The questions are administered by the city personnel department.

If the applicants score 70 per cent or more in this exam, they go before an orals board. This board usually consists of two ranking officers of other police departments, a psychologist and members of the city personnel department. Santa Cruz officers sit in but do not participate.

Here the applicant is somewhat dissected, with probings into his background, stability, work patterns, integrity and particularly why he wants to be a police officer.

"You try to find someone who is stable, strong enough mentally and physically, to handle the job," Marengi said.

After this comes the physical agility test which determines the strength and fitness of would-be officers.

The tests include doing as many push-ups as possible, a standing broad-jump, swinging hand-over-hand across a 20-foot suspended ladder, running a half mile in 3½ minutes or less, lifting a 50-pound weight from the ground

and then five times over the head with each arm and climbing up and down a 20-foot ladder carrying a 100-pound sack of sand.

At about this phase the applicants are fingerprinted and photographed. They are checked thoroughly through California Bureau Investigation and Identification and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for any criminal or other undesirable background.

If all comes back clear and a physician declares a healthy body after a thorough examination, those who pass are placed on a list in order of their cumulative scores on the physical agility, oral and written tests.

The police department may now choose from the top three men.

This choice narrows down in a personal interview conducted by Police Chief Geno Pini, Marengi and generally a department captain and lieutenant.

"This is so we will be able to get to know the man and tell him what to expect in the event he is hired. By this time we know almost about the man's ancestors," Marengi said.

After the personal interview, the chief makes his choice.

The new officer starts on a six-month probationary period at base pay of \$497 per month. Before doing anything he has to put out about \$300 for his uniforms and gun. The department issues him a star, hat emblem, nightstick and handcuffs.

For a week each, the new officer works at the police desk, and in the traffic, detective and juvenile bureaus, and then progresses to a patrol assignment. He will then spend five weeks on the Gavilan campus at Salinas for a course in law enforcement under the California Peace Officers training program. He returns to the department for about another two months of probationary work and then the final decision is made, either he is an officer, or he isn't. There is no recourse to dismissal during the probationary term.

Recently there was an opening on the force and 90 persons applied. Fifty-five showed up for the written exam and 24 passed it. Twelve passed the oral and physical agilities to get onto the list of possible officers and the final winner was Donald W. Hollen, 28, who is now undergoing probationary training.

