

Events mark anniversary of Loma Prieta quake

Earthquake - 10 yrs + later

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REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF REPORT

WATSONVILLE — Healing and rebuilding success stories are the focus of a number of local celebrations marking the 10-year anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake.

A "Celebration of Thanks" will be held Sunday at St. Patrick's Church from 3 to 5:04 p.m., the time the quake hit in 1989.

The Gothic-style church, a landmark at the entrance to Main Street, was severely damaged. The church was built in 1903 and withstood the 1906 earthquake, but sustained too much damage to the interior in 1989 and had to be razed.

From 1989 until reconstruction was completed in

1994, masses were held in the Moreland Notre Dame gymnasium while the rebuilding of St. Patrick's church in its original architectural design was underway. The estimated cost was \$4.3 million.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Michael Miller, a fund-raising committee was formed and it was through the generosity of 4,486 contributors that the debt has been paid as of September of this year.

Those contributors include the church's parishioners, Catholic and Protestant churches throughout the country, special event committees, local businesses, and community and club groups.

To celebrate, the church's mortgage will be burned

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Photo courtesy Carmen Rivas of PageCraft

After sustaining extensive damage in the 1989 earthquake, Saint Patrick's Church — shown here in the demolition phase — had to be stripped down to a thin facade before reconstruction began.

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QUAKE

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in the church's parking lot Sunday. With Bishop Sylvester Ryan presiding, priests assigned to the parish during the past 10 years will say Mass and various bands will perform. The church's bells will peal at 5:04 p.m.

Area residents may also help create a community oral history of the earthquake by visiting the Watsonville Community Hospital Sunday and describing their memories on videotape.

Organizers of the event want to help members of the community record their memories and stories about how the earthquake has shaped their lives over the last decade. The oral history project and a Loma Prieta remembrance slide show given by a hospital emergency room nurse, Lisa Angell, will also

help residents be better prepared to handle future emergencies and disasters.

The all-day event has the theme "Ten Years After ... Are You Ready?" and will offer hospital tours, entertainment, fun activities, and safety information for all ages. Firefighters, police, and paramedics will give tips on preparedness.

In addition, free "Kindervision" child safety education and identification will include a videotape and fingerprinting for kids.

"We feel this event is a positive way to remember what's happened in the past, and then to learn what we can do as a community to prepare for the future," said Barry Schneider, CEO of the hospital. "All of us — the hospital, the area's emergency response organizations, the residents who undergo the CERT training — are excited about this opportunity to show area residents how we can all respond confidently and appropriately if disaster strikes again."

In addition to the event at the hospital, the Watsonville Airport across the street will be holding its sixth annual Open House to commemorate the efforts of aviators who participated in the Loma Prieta Airlift to bring needed supplies to area residents after the earthquake. There will be a shuttle running between the two events.

Scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the open house will feature an earthquake presentation, nickel-a-pound airplane rides, displays of planes, hot rods and antique cars and motorcycles, a pancake breakfast a tri-tip barbecue lunch, and the dedication of the Watsonville Aviation Education Center.

The quake will also be remembered at an exhibit reception at the Copy Bean copy center and cafe at 550 Main St. from 4 to 7 p.m. The exhibit will feature local artists and include a slide show by Register-Pajaronian photographer Tarmo Hannula. The exhibit run through Nov. 30.