

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

38 Pages — 25 Cents

Watsonville, Calif., Wednesday, April 18, 1990

Pulitzer Prize, 1956



123rd Year — No. 39

✓CF EARTHQUAKE - 1989 Watsonville RP 4/18/90

A swarm of earthquakes

Early morning tremors fray nerves, do little damage

Experts say it's only aftershocks

By BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Seismologists, at the UC-Santa Cruz Institute for Tectonics said this morning that the 5.4 earthquake that rocked Santa Cruz County was probably an aftershock of the devastating 7.1 quake in October.

Aftershocks, generally diminishing in frequency and magnitude, will continue to hit the Monterey Bay area for weeks, months and even years, institute director Thorne Lay told reporters at a press conference at UCSC this morning.

"It appears that the sequence of aftershocks (from this morning's quake) is tapering off," Lay said. "This is typical aftershock behavior and not unusual."

As an example, Lay said that measurable aftershocks continue 20 years after the 1971 San Fernando Valley earthquake. Most of those shocks are too small to be felt by anyone and are detectable only on the very sensitive seismographs used by the scientists.

The largest of today's quakes was minuscule in comparison to



6 out of 14 quakes were 4.0 or higher

By CHELA ZABIN
and BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITERS

Damage was minor this morning and there were no reports of injuries following the swarm of earthquakes that shook Watsonville and the rest of Santa Cruz County and much of the San Francisco Bay area six months after the deadly Oct. 17 earthquake.

The quakes also came 84 years to the day after the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco.

Six of this morning's quakes measured 4 or higher on the Richter Scale. At least 14 quakes were recorded, centered four to five miles east of Watsonville, on the San Andreas fault.

Items flew off shelves in homes and stores as the quakes hit and power went out in various parts of the county, but as of 10:45 this morning, no serious injuries or damage were reported.

Power went out at the Green Valley Substation, which supplies power to 5,500 Watsonville-area customers, at 6:54 this morning. George Sarkisian, a public in-

Other stories

- This morning's aftershocks drove people from their houses and onto the street. Page 1.

- Mobile homes, hit hard in the Oct. 17 quake, received little damage this time around. Page 9

- In the FEMA trailers, the aftershocks brought new terror to those hit hardest by the big earthquake. Page 9.

- Santa Cruz mourned the victims of October's quake yesterday, then escaped this morning's aftershocks with only frayed nerves. Page 9.

but plans to move the chain-link fencing closer to the church may be put on hold, city officials said.

A team of structural engineers had inspected the Pajaro River bridge at the south end of Main Street, which had also been damaged in the October quake, earlier this morning and had determined that it had not moved. Officials are prepared to close the bridge should an earthquake

the Oct. 17 earthquake.

"It would take thousands of these quakes (5.4 magnitude) to equal the October quake," he said.

Preliminary indications this morning placed the epicenters of the quakes on or slightly west of the San Andreas fault, between Watsonville and San Juan Bautista.

It will be several days before the exact location of the epicenters can be plotted, Lay told the reporters.

Asked if there was any connection between today's quakes, the quakes yesterday in Upland in Southern California and even the 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Indonesia, research seismologist Susan Schwartz said there is no known connection.

Asked if today's quakes are a precursor to another "big one" in Northern California, Lay and Schwartz said they don't think so.



Diane Varni

Corralitos got a good shaking from this morning's aftershocks, and the interior of Corralitos Market was a mess as the quakes knocked items off the shelves.

Francisco office, said that power had been restored to 80 percent of customers within an hour and that he expected the rest to be back up by noon today.

Maple Street between Main and Union streets in Watsonville had been roped off this morning, because city officials were worried about the safety of the Porter Building, which had been severely damaged in the Oct. 17 quake and sustained further damage during this morning's shakers.

City Clerk Lorraine Washington said that city engineers and an engineer hired by one of the building's owners would be looking at the building today to decide whether it needs to come down.

St. Patrick's Church apparently did not suffer additional damage,

measuring 6 or higher on the Richter scale hit.

There was a rock slide on Highway 129 this morning and lanes were closed temporarily while CALTRANS cleared the road. According to a Salsipuedes Fire District spokesman, the falling rocks caused minor damage to several vehicles, but none one was injured. Slides also affected Highway 152 and Eureka Canyon Road.

The U.S. Geological Service reported seven earthquakes this morning, with the following Richter scale measurements: 6:37, 4.4; 6:41 4.1; 6:53 5.4; 7:52, 4.1; 8:28 4.0; 8:36 3.5; 8:46, 4.9.

Watsonville Community Hospital, which had lost power twice this morning, switched to generator power for the rest of

See QUAKES page 2 ►

Headlines



Mike McCollum

Juana Rodriguez, standing with her baby in her arms, and Angelina Lopez took their children to Geiser Field after the rash of earthquakes this morning.

QUAKES

► From page 1

the day, just as a precaution, hospital vice president Dori Edson said. Edson said two people had come to the hospital's emergency room with earthquake-related complaints: One person had suffered a small cut from broken glass, and another had come to the hospital with chest pains.

"Staff and patients are a little shaky," said Edson, "but otherwise we're all right. The building, which had suffered major damage in the October quake, was fine, she said.

At Salud Para La Gente, medical director Josefa Simpkin said things were pretty quiet this morning. The clinic had only received two calls as of 10:20 a.m., both from people suffering "from nerves" and wanting medication, she said.

None of the local frozen-food companies contacted this morning reported any damage, but Rudy Sanchez, human resources manager at Pillsbury-Green Giant, said that the plant sent home the 200 employees working this morning as a precautionary measure and to let people check on their families. Sanchez said plant officials were hoping to start up again at noon and expected to run its night shift as usual.

Meanwhile, throughout the city, obviously shaken families were taking their belongings outside. As of 9 this morning, there were two families sitting on the lawn at Callaghan Park, the site of an official tent city after the October quake. More families gathered at Geiser Field at Watsonville High

School. City workers and their children crouched under desks during the larger shakes.

Firefighters throughout the county reported downed power lines and minor rockslides.

Many people in Santa Cruz County this morning said the worst damage they suffered was mental.

Early-morning workers in the county government center said light fixtures began swaying violently during the heavy shock.

Supervisors' chairman Robley Levy said the third quake knocked pictures off the wall in her La Selva Beach home.

One College Road home outside Watsonville, damaged in the Oct. 17 earthquake, was further damaged this morning when it fell off its support jacks.

County Emergency Services Coordinator Nancy Gordon said most of the phone calls received by the county emergency communications center came from news media trying to get information on the quake.

"Radio stations were wanting information to give out to their morning audiences," Gordon said. Besides the news media, most of the phone calls into the communications center this morning were from residents throughout the county reporting that their electrical power was out.

Telephone circuits in the Pajaro Valley were overloaded following the quake, with many customers having to wait long periods of time to get a dial tone.

Callers from outside the area frequently were connected to recordings, informing them that "all circuits are busy; please try your call again later."

In the Corralitos area, the Corralitos Market had most of its goods empty onto the isles.

Corralitos firefighters were on the streets minutes after the third quake hit the area. They reported no gas leaks, fires, injuries, or major damage in the area.

There were a few people walking along Hames and Corralitos roads to see if there had been any damage in the area.

At Watsonville High School, maintenance workers walked through the main building to inspect for damage. They reported that plaster from the ceiling on the second floor had fallen, but no other damage was observed.

The building's auditorium and its balcony did not seem to be further damaged. Last week, a group of engineers told school officials that the main building, and in particular its auditorium

and balcony, was unsafe.

The Watsonville Fire Department reported some wire arcing at East Lake Avenue and Hushbeck Avenue this morning. Wires were also down along Green Valley Road, Hawthorne Lane, Blake Road and Corralitos Road.

North Monterey County suffered little effects from this morning's quakes. The Sheriff's Department checked dams and areas previously affected by the Oct. 17 quake and found nothing but a chunk of concrete missing from the recently rebuilt Sandholt Bridge in Moss Landing, according to Capt. Roger Chatterton, commander of the Patrol Division, and a tree down at Murphy's Crossing.

Staff writers Susanna Heckman, Emilio Alvarado and Stacey Vreeken also contributed to this report.

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

(USPS 669-540)

MIKE WALLACE
Editor

BUD O' BRIEN
Managing Editor

GERRY BUTTERFIELD
Business Office Manager

FRED SKILL
General Manager

BILL SCHAFFER
Advertising Director

GIL PETERSON
Production Manager

Published daily except Sunday, Christmas and New Year's Day by John P. Scripps Newspapers, at 1000 Main St., P.O. Box 780, Watsonville CA. 95077. Phone 724-0611 or 688-2114. Fax, 722-8386. Santa Cruz Office 303 Water St., 429-8342. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to REGISTER-PAJARONIAN, P.O. Box 780, Watsonville, CA 95077.

The Watsonville Register-Pajaronian, Green Sheet and Sun is the result of consolidations which merged the identities of the following newspapers: The Evening Pajaronian, established 1868; The Transcript, later The Watsonville Register, established 1876; and The Morning Sun, established 1937.

MISSED DELIVERY? Phone 724-0611 or 688-2114
between 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Circulation Business Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Home Delivery \$5.50 a month
Single Copies 25 cents. Mail \$7.50 a month



OAK MOTH LARVAE