



Paul Ellis lost his house to landslide in 1982 and earthquake in 1989.

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Dan Coyro/Sentinel

# Couple loses home second time

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**BOULDER CREEK** — In 1982, Paul and Faye Ellis survived the Love Creek landslide that killed 11 of their neighbors and caused \$27,000 worth of damage to their Ben Lomond home.

The couple sold the house and moved to an exclusive Boulder Creek neighborhood where they

would feel safer.

But Tuesday, the Ellis' dream house on Rebecca Drive was destroyed by a temblor measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale. Faye Ellis was briefly trapped inside the house, but managed to scramble to safety.

"We're survivors," said Paul Ellis, surveying the wreckage of his \$500,000 home Friday. "We thought we were away from all that, up here."

Ellis was philosophical about his loss. A longtime captain in the Santa Clara Fire Department, Ellis has seen hundreds of tragedies, he said.

"We've seen people lose everything in fires," he said. "I'm amazed at how much we've been able to save."

Faye Ellis, a well-known local historian, was working in the kitchen when the earthquake hit,

her husband said.

"The refrigerator came across the room and a door came down on top and protected her," Ellis said. "With the broken stuff all over the floor it was too slippery to climb out, and she had to grab a towel and wipe things up before she could get a grip."

An anonymous passerby came into the house and helped his wife

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## Couple/

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outside, Ellis said. Faye Ellis survived with only bumps and bruises.

Ellis and some fellow firefighters gingerly entered the teetering house, no more than two at a time, to remove the family's belongings Friday. The house collapsed backward and now rests precariously against a handful of redwood trees in the backyard.

A dangerous-looking crack in the earth bisecting the lot worried local officials at first, but geologists now believe the fissure is due to poorly packed fill dirt on the site, Ellis said.