

Hwy. 17 Picket Patrol

By Wallace Wood
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When the first Fourth of July visitors spill over the crest of Highway 17 tomorrow, they will find about 30 sign-carrying pickets waiting for them.

The pickets, residents who live along the mountain roadway, will be on duty from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to warn motorists of the dangers of driving the twisting curves.

According to Scotts Valley resident (Hap) Hasty, who is organizing the pickets, persons will be placed at more lethal spots, where several fatal accidents have occurred.

Grim messages will warn of "Bloody Alley" (the series of curves about a mile below Cloud Nine restaurant), "Killer Curve" (Laurel curve), and "Coffin Corner" at the (Glenwood turnoff), with possibly a final sign at the bottom of the long hill at Santa's Village.

Pickets will be on duty again Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Purpose of the picketing will be to emphasize need for improving Highway 17, according to Hasty.

Residents repeatedly have asked county supervisors for "construction priority" on Highway 17.

Supervisors have declined to change their recommendations. Supervisor Francis Silliman says any attempt to alter priorities "might place our entire priority list in danger," since changes would involve considerable government red tape.

The picketing operation has been cleared with the California Highway patrol, Hasty said.

Meanwhile, the Santa Cruz Safety Council's Highway 17 study committee has joined the ranks of organizations urging top priority for Highway 17 improvements.

The committee filed a telegram with county supervisors today, asking the highway be jumped to first priority spot for freeway construction by the state.