

Dave Dutchfer (left) and Rick Rostedt at their primitive cabin in a sunlit clearing

The dome that Jeff and Gail call home

Newcomers to the Santa Cruz Wilds

By Katy Butler and
Steve Rubenstein
Chronicle Correspondents

Boulder Creek,
Santa Cruz county

Traffic jams have come to this dense pocket of forested suburbia.

It starts weekday mornings at 5:30—the exodus of commuters by the thousands going “over the hill” to their nine-to-five jobs on the Peninsula.

Sometimes the cars stretch along Highway 9—the main drag of the San Lorenzo Valley—past the gaggle of realty offices until, released by the traffic light, they burst by the shopping center.

“They line up like a caravan,” says state forest ranger Robert Voss, staring out the window at the steady stream winding down the serpentine road past his office.

Like the shopping center, the commuters are newcomers to the Santa Cruz mountains—part of the changes that have rocked this region as surely and swiftly as the grisly lore of murders solved and otherwise.

The Santa Cruz mountains. Where middle-aged commuters and young urban refugees live in adjacent cabins, where traces of smog now tinge the treetops, where white collar meets redneck under the evergreens.

No one knows exactly how many people are tucked into these hills. County census taker Jan Fosselius, who directed an April nose-count, estimates a population of 17,000 for the San Lorenzo Valley—the narrow, 18-mile-long gorge that follows the San Lorenzo



On a Santa Cruz highway commuters returning to their homes faced a multitude of signs

Lane—live Neil and Linda Kaminar in a cabin without electricity or indoor plumbing. It was hammered together last summer with the help of friendly neighbors.

Neil, a mechanical engineer with a master's degree, was unable to find local work in his field and instead commutes to his job where he circuit boards to make ends meet and feed his five turkeys, 12 chickens, two goats, a horse, and guinea pig and two children.

One of them is eight-year-old

Lenore Kaminar, a third-grader at Boulder Creek Elementary School, which last year was forced to adopt double sessions to cope with the population swell.

In the evenings, Lenore helps Linda feed the turkeys and then listens to country music on the portable radio, which became the family entertainment center ever since three-year-old sister Tanya dropped pennies down the back of the battery-powered television and shorted it out.

Even without the radio, Memo-

ry lane is not isolated from the gossip and rumor mill of the townfolk—rumors which of late have focused on the bodies of two young women found slain last month in shallow roadside graves near Felton.

“Lenore got scared and cried when she heard about it,” said Linda. “She doesn’t like to go to the outhouse by herself at night. She makes one of us go with her.”

Down the road in a gray trailer also without electricity lives car-

penter Dave Sale, 20, who had to give up his \$1000 stereo when he moved from San Luis Obispo.

“I miss it a lot,” says Dave, who instead falls asleep to baseball games and talk shows over his portable radio.

“If it wasn’t for that radio,” says Dave, “I’d go crazy.”

At few places in the Santa Cruz mountains have organized communes taken hold. The residents seem too independent to follow the strict regimen of group living. There is hospitality, with conversation and shared meals, but most of it is by invitation only.

“I’m up here because I want to be left alone,” says Jeff, a 28-year-old longshoreman, outside his wooden geodesic dome.

“We live an entirely different life from people who have electricity. When you want a cup of coffee, you’ve got to go out and start the chain saw.”

Jeff stubbed out his cigaret and walked around the side of the dome. The buzz of the chain saw cut the damp air, and moments later he returned with a pile of neatly sawn logs.

Inside the cozy 30-foot-wide dome, Jeff’s 22-year-old wife Gail cooked up tomatoes and greens from the vegetable patch.

“Technically, the dome is illegal,” Jeff said. It was built without building permits or inspections. “But it’s built strong. If the inspectors ever came out here, it would

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about anything. The well-publicized history of mass murder began in 1970, when John Frazier killed ophthalmologist Victor Ohta and four others. In 1973, eight persons were murdered by Edmund Kemper and six by Herbert Mullin.

To Noren, a 16-year veteran of the department, the record represents nothing more than “coincidence.”

“Let’s assume these people exist. What the hell, they have to live someplace. It’s just a coincidence they happen to live in Santa Cruz.

“It’s just unfortunate that we had three crazies here in such a short period of time. Just a freak of nature.”

But the draw of the Santa Cruz mountains, where both population and prices have soared higher than the treetops, has withstood and even flourished through the grisly decade, one of the few suburban areas to witness such wholesale growth.

And it’s certainly the only area to feature as a main drawing card something like the “Mystery Spot,” where tourists pay \$1.50 each to watch the laws of gravity seemingly disappear.

“There’s something mysterious about this area, folks,” say the guide, as a golf ball appears to roll uphill. He might as well be speaking for the county as a whole.

“We’re not sure what it is, but you won’t find it anywhere else.”

Our Correspondent

Colombia’s New Jets

Bogota

The Colombian airline Avianca will start flying jumbo jets on its regular flights to the U.S. later this year, Avianca chairman Fernando Mazuera said here yesterday.

Reuter

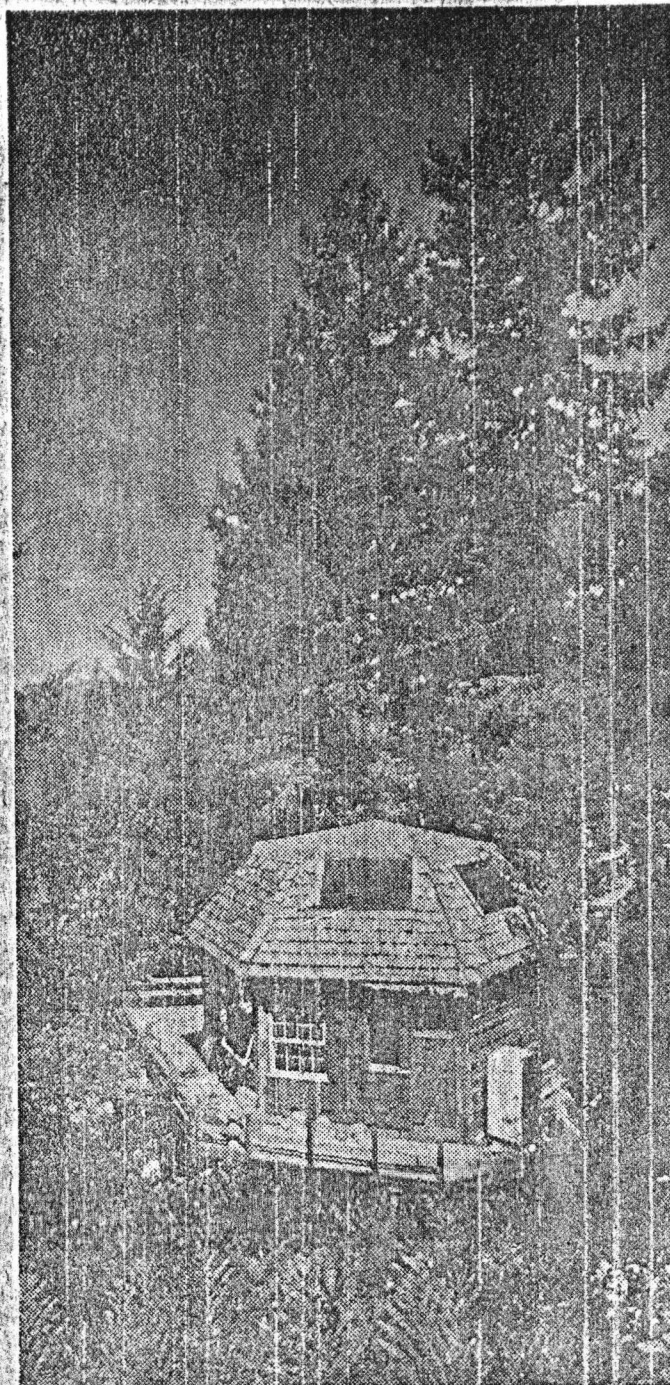
The Artistic House That Max Built

Away From It All



Dave Dutchfer (left) and Rick Rostedt at their primitive cabin in a sunlit clearing

Photos by Gary Fong



The dome that Jeff and Gail call home

The Sheriff And Mountain Mysteries

Santa Cruz

Sitting in his third-floor corner office overlooking a motel, a playground and miles of open space, sheriff Al Noren of Santa Cruz explains the difficulty of enforcing the law in a county so unlike the view from his window.

Noren estimated there are hundreds of squatters and large numbers of fugitives hiding out in the hills but that the "only time you find out about them is when someone tells you."

"Santa Cruz is an hour and a half from San Francisco. That might make it easier to hide out. There's more room to move around, people are less likely to be spotted."

"But the Symbionese Liberation Army hid out in the middle of San Francisco. To each his own."

The rumors of fugitive hide-outs were so rampant that when Charles Manson-follower Susan Murphy escaped last month from a southern California prison and was traced to San Jose, the local gossip was that she must be holed up somewhere in the Santa Cruz mountains. It came as a shock when she was arrested by FBI agents in Portland, Ore.

"Most of the things you hear about Santa Cruz have been sensational. It's the idea of a small community torn asunder by violent crimes," said Noren.

"Well, we're not torn asunder. I don't know of anybody fearful about anything."

The well-publicized history of mass murder began in 1970, when John Frazier killed epistemologists.

No one knows exactly how many people are tucked into these hills. County census taker Jan Fosselius, who directed an April nose-count, estimates a population of 17,000 for the San Lorenzo Valley—the narrow, 18-mile-long gorge that follows the San Lorenzo river as it winds through the mountains north of Santa Cruz.

But even he concedes the count is far from accurate, due largely to the privacy-hungry residents of the back country.

"Lots of houses had barking dogs in front," Fosselius recalled. "If the dog wouldn't let 'em by, we'd figure there's about two people per dog."

Ranger Voss, who supervises the state division of forestry in Felton on the valley floor, estimates there are "hundreds of squatters all over the place."

"If people want to live like a bear in the woods, they can do it. Once you get into the forest, no one can ever see you."

Dave Dutcher, 25, and Rick Rostedt, 21, share a one-room cabin without electricity or running water in a sunlit clearing in the thick forest of the mountains.

Their home seems out of reach of the two sheriff's deputy cars that regularly patrol the valley. Houses in the area are so remote that one homeowner north of Boulder Creek recently held a burglar at gunpoint for an hour and a half before the law arrived.

Getting into the forest usually means making a single turn off Highway 9. Suddenly the road narrows, the white line and pavement disappear into one of what looks like hundreds of logging roads that crisscross and switch-back.

Down one such road—Memory

meet and feed his five turkeys, 12 chickens, two goats, a horse, and guinea pig and two children.

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Reuters

The Artistic House That Max Built

Boulder Creek, Santa Cruz county

Max Hartstein, a 47-year-old artist turned builder, pulled out his carpenter's rule and measured the space for a bedroom window.

In three weeks he expects to finish this three-bedroom house in a quiet ravine above Boulder Creek with the help of his partner and his two teenage sons. The house should sell for \$80,000 to \$100,000.

It is filled with the hand-made touches beloved of hippie craftsmen: ornately carved and polished wooden mouldings; stained-glass windows; an inlaid bathroom door shaped like the wings of a giant butterfly.

"This house is probably worth a lot more as an art piece," Max said, looking at the finely-tooled redwood interior. "But we'll have to give that part of it away."

Max settled in Boulder Creek ten years ago, following a dozen years playing bass and painting pictures in North Beach and Mexico.

"I was the first person in Boulder Creek with a beard, except maybe for a couple of old men," he said.

He bought a house on a riverbank and kept painting

and playing music on a small allowance from his parents.

Following him came thousands of bearded and fuzzy-haired young people, many of whom discovered the valley after the University of California opened its Santa Cruz col-

leges in 1965.

They moved back to the land and into the mountains, renting vacation cabins and building hideouts in the thick forest.

"We had a lot of floaters," said Joe Hart, a former econom-

ic planner for Santa Cruz county. "There was a hitchhiker every two blocks in Boulder Creek."

At first, the old-timers resented the "hippie invasion" and county officials cracked down on communes and primi-

tive dwellings.

Then, in 1972, Pat Litkey, one of the new breed, won a seat on the county Board of Supervisors running on the UTE (Undesirable Transient Element) ticket.

A lot of the floaters washed out. "A few try to make it on welfare, but it's hard," said Max.

Others, like Max, picked up new skills as carpenters and craftspeople and dug in. Max began remodelling houses 2½ years ago.

"Getting up early in the morning changes you," he said with a smile.

"I've become more countri-fied."

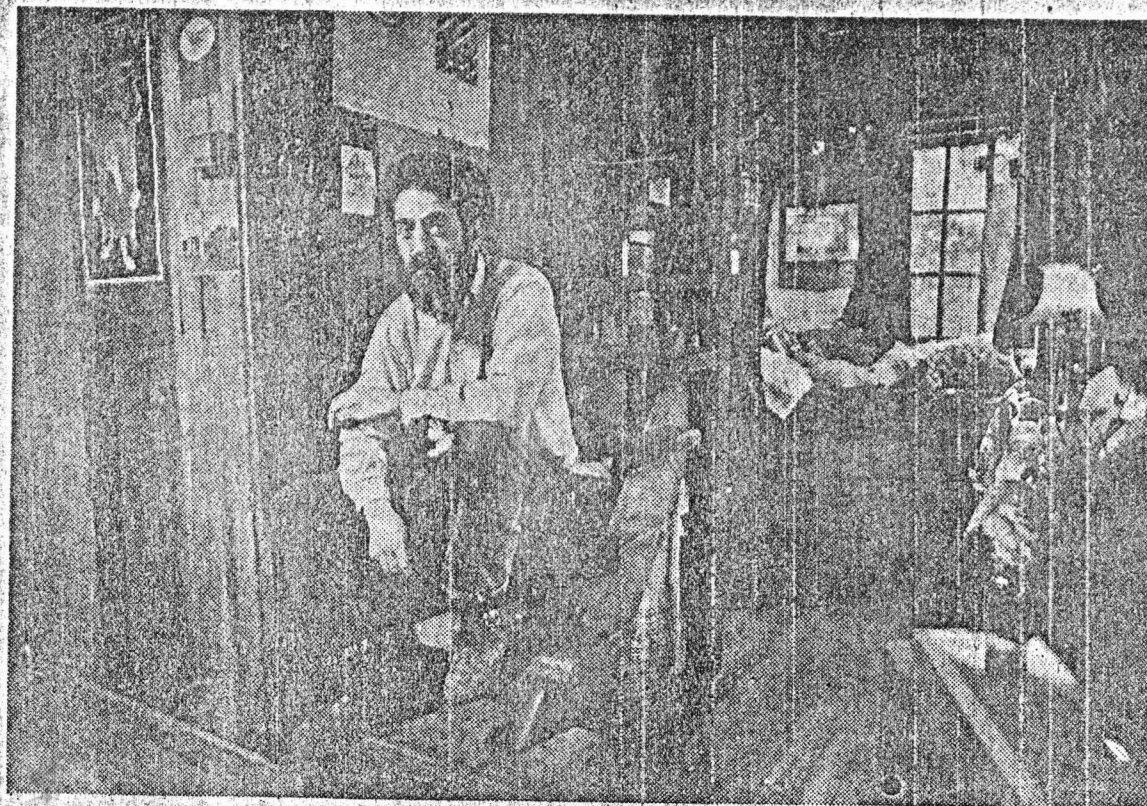
And the old-time locals who originally resented the "hippie invasion" have come to like the new breed.

"We're seeing very little of the hippie types who park their vans under the trees now," said Craig Robinson, whose San Lorenzo Valley Press weekly newspaper used to publish cracks about hippies regularly.

"They've become almost solid citizens. They've kind of blended in."

"They're idealists. And no community can have too many idealists."

—Katy Butler



Artist Max Hartstein rested from his labors in his handmade home

The Commuters' Big Invasion

Ben Lomond,
Santa Cruz county

The isolation of vacation cabins tucked under the redwoods of the Santa Cruz mountains may soon be gone forever.

Many of them have been pressed into year-round service as the homes of commuters who are willing to brave the one-hour roller-derby ride over packed highways and spaghetti-like mountain roads to jobs in the Santa Clara valley.

In the San Lorenzo valley towns threaded by Highway 9, 17,000 people live where 13,000 lived in 1970. Santa Cruz county population has grown from 123,000 to 160,000 in the same period; more than 27 per cent commute to jobs over the county line.

BeeGee, 27, gets up at 5:30 every weekday morning to commute from the home he is buying in Boulder Creek to his job with an electronics firm in Santa Clara.

He says he likes the quiet, and the houses are still affordable.

But he still goes to Santa Clara on weekends to party. He's black and, as he says, "there aren't too many of my kind of people" in Boulder Creek.

The commuters are contributing to the housing crunch in the valley; rents and land values are rising rapidly.

Two years ago, Ben Lomond realtors Dolores and Jim Baker sold a three-bedroom, two-bath house in Boulder Creek for \$27,000. This year, the house changed hands again, for \$44,900.

"There's no comparable area," Jim Baker said. "Not the Sierra. You can't commute from the Sierra to the bay like you can from Santa Cruz. Ninety per cent of our sales are to people commuting 'over the hill.' They're glad to pay the price."

Steve Rubenstein

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meet the code."

In three weeks, Jeff expects to deliver Gail's second child, with the help of a midwife from Santa Cruz.

The couple say they don't miss their life in Southern California, where Jeff was making \$8 an hour and racing to keep up with payments. He couldn't see mortgaging the next 30 years of his life to pay for a suburban home, he said.

So he's doing it in the woods instead. In another year and a half, his land will be paid off. Then, Jeff says, they may move to Mexico and rent out the dome.

According to local realtors, the couple could turn a healthy profit. Property values have doubled and, in some cases, tripled in the past ten years. Nine out of ten cabins on the market are quickly gobbled up by commuters.

One site that has undergone such speculative growth is Last Chance road—a collection of some 50 plots, owned mostly by young



San Francisco, he says, is visible most mornings when he looks out from his home atop South Pine hill over the ocean.

"You can see the reason," he says, pointing to a thin smog layer blowing up from Santa Cruz and down from the Peninsula. "It can't get up this high, though. We're OK."

"There's more room, less noise," says Flaherty, who in the day can hear the countdowns from a rocket testing center several ridges over and at night listens for the trucks changing gear on the coast highway four miles distant.

"I wouldn't mind having a phone, though." The road tax for Jeff and Stephanie Singer, who live in two domes further down Last Chance road, was \$87 last year.

The levy slightly miffs Jeff, because the road leading to his place is ungraded and cars have a tendency to get stuck in the mud during the long winter rains.

Isolation, according to Stephan-

Tentative Goodrich, Union Pact

Columbus, Ohio

The B.F. Goodrich Co. and the United Rubber Workers' union reached a tentative agreement yesterday on a new three-year contract.

Goodrich was the last of the country's four major tire companies to settle with the workers. The announcement came after two days of intensive bargaining.

Harold J. Fast, Goodrich director of labor relations, and union president Peter Bommarito announced the settlement.

Fast said the pact follows the basic economic pattern for the tire and rubber industry set in Washington last month by the Firestone Co. and the union, upon the recommendation of U. S. Secretary of Labor W.J. Usery.

United Press

Tahoe Planners To Hold Hearings On Proposed Parks

South Lake Tahoe

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will hold hearings in Reno, Sacramento and the Bay Area during the next two weeks to discuss creating two national recreation areas along the shores of Lake Tahoe.

Also on the agenda are propos-

San Francisco Chronicle 5
Tues., Sept. 7, 1976

Home Looted As New Father Visits Hospital

Thieves broke into the house at 165 Kensington way Sunday night and stole articles worth \$40,000, including two Persian rugs worth \$21,000, police said yesterday.

The resident, realtor Hamid Ghazi, 32, was at Children's Hospital visiting his wife, Bella, and their daughter, Tiffany, born earlier in the day.

Besides the rugs, \$5000 worth of jewelry, \$3000 of camera equipment and more than \$10,000 of clothing and miscellaneous materials were taken.

The thieves left the crib and bassinet.

Communist's View of the New Spain

Belgrade

Dolores Ibarruri, the Communist orator whose speeches electrified Spanish crowds during the Spanish civil war of 1936-39, believes the time has come for complete political reconciliation in her country.

But at the same time, she thinks it is unlikely that after 37 years in exile, mostly in the Soviet Union, she will be permitted to