

San Jose, California, Tuesday morning, August 7, 1979

# San Jose Mercury

20 cents

More Than a Century of Service — 1851-1979

Santa Cruz  
County Edition

## Damage light in 6.0 area quake Gilroy, Hollister hit hardest

By Christopher Drake  
and Mark Saylor  
Staff Writers

All the pins on all 10 lanes at the Gilroy Bowl suddenly fell down in a clatter that should have made bowlers leap for joy.

Instead, they were running for the doors.

"Everyone got strikes," said counter clerk Portia Bruton, "but nobody cared."

The 6.0-strength earthquake, centered only five miles north-east of that city of 20,000, did a bit more than make the hearts of the area's bowlers miss a

beat. It sent a dozen people to the hospital — three with heart attacks, one with a fractured elbow — brought plaster and merchandise crashing into the aisles of stores, cracked a few windows and played havoc with the electricity and phone lines.

Though the earthquake was the largest in the Bay Area in 68 years, injuries were minimal and damage was slight. But residents in these parts were knee-deep in anxiety and inconvenience.

"I've lived here all of my life and I'm usually not shook by the shakes. But I am now,"

said Louise Simmons, a book-keeper at the Hollister J.C. Penney's Store, where chunks of plaster carpeted the boys' department.

When the quake struck shortly after 10 a.m., Rudy Sanchez, the night bartender at the Smokehouse Club in Hollister, was asleep in his apartment above the bar. His bed collapsed and Sanchez tumbled onto the floor.

"I got out right away, fast," he said, still a little shaken two hours later.

Across San Benito Boule-

Back of Section, Col. 2

✓ Reaction of San  
Joseans 8A

✓ Map of quake  
area 8A

✓ 'Pretty scary' in  
San Francisco 9A

✓ What to do if a  
quake hits 9A

## Worst shock since 1911

By Philip J. Trownstine  
Staff Writer

The Bay Area's strongest earthquake in 68 years rumbled out of San Martin Monday, shaking buildings, knocking out electricity and causing widespread minor damage throughout the Santa Clara Valley.

Several people were treated for cuts and bumps at South County hospitals and three were admitted to Hazel Hawkins Hospital in Hollister with heart attacks.

But there were no other reports of serious injuries from the quake, which the U.S. Geological Survey measured at 6.0 on the Richter scale.

Shock waves, swaying office buildings from San Jose to San Francisco and rattling teacups and nerves, were reported as far north as Sacramento and as far south as Bakersfield.

The 10:05 a.m. temblor along the Calaveras Fault, an arm of the San Andreas Fault, was felt as a sharp jolt and rumble for about 20 seconds. More than 100 aftershocks, some reaching a 2.7 magnitude, rattled the area throughout the day.

The earthquake, which seismologists rated as "moderate to major," was centered 6 miles east of San Martin and about a mile south of Coyote

Back of Section, Col. 5





David Hausam — Mercury

Manuel Darias, left, and Tony Jung clean up their grocery store in Gilroy after the earthquake hit

# 6.0 temblor jars nerves

*Continued from Page 1*

Reservoir," according to Rick Lester of the USGS earthquake study center at Menlo Park. He said it was about five miles underground.

All dams along the Coyote Creek reservoir system were inspected for damage, said Jim Melton of the Santa Clara County Water District. "We walked the face and both sides of the Coyote Reservoir dam and everything was OK," he said.

The drawbridge on the Dumbarton Bridge between Palo Alto and Fremont was stuck open for about an hour because of a power failure, and 29 BART trains along the system's 71-mile route were halted for five minutes before resuming at 25 mph while train operators checked the track for damage. None was reported and normal 80-mph service was soon restored.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. said more than 1,100 customers in Gilroy, Hollister and Fremont lost electrical power for up to three hours and that an additional 400 Gilroy residents lost power for most of the day.

Phone lines were jammed with callers after the temblor, but Pacific Telephone Co. spokesmen said there was no cable damage.

In Gilroy, the largest city close to the epicenter, liquor, hardware and grocery stores closed for two to three hours to clean up merchandise that cracked and splattered in the aisles and plaster that popped from walls and ceilings.

Ceiling tiles were shaken loose at the Gilroy Municipal Courthouse and the clock in the 1905-vintage City Hall was knocked about six inches out of place.

In Hollister there were widespread reports of broken windows and bricks falling off some of the older downtown

racks began tumbling off shelves and old 78-records rolled out of their vertical holders.

"I'm a native Californian so I've felt them all," said Terrell Lyn Thomas, the disc jockey who was on the air at the time. "But this sucker kicked harder than any of 'em."

After the quake the station broadcast such favorites as "California Has Its Faults" and "Shake, Rattle and Roll."

Fire alarms in buildings throughout San Jose were set off by the temblor, according to San Jose Fire Capt. Larry Salo, and buildings creaked and moaned. But city and county authorities said there were no reports of serious damage or injury.

Cracks were reported to have appeared on a wall in the visitor's area at Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall.

About 800 persons, many of them religious fundamentalists, who had packed the board of supervisors' chambers to argue against adoption of a gay rights ordinance, sang hymns and chanted when their leader declared the quake a sign from the Lord.

In Campbell, the 18-story PruneYard office building swayed like a drunken sailor. "This place must have looked like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The whole place shook like crazy," said an FBI agent on the sixth floor.

Office workers in San Francisco skyscrapers reported being bounced up and down. A man in the Transamerica Tower said, "It was like being on top of a slippery banana."

And at Marine World in Redwood City, animals gathered with like species — zebras with zebras and giraffes with giraffes — throughout the quake, according to spokeswoman Mary O'Herron. Lla-



1905-vintage City Hall was knocked about six inches out of place.

In Hollister there were widespread reports of broken windows and bricks falling off some of the older downtown buildings. The roof of Walker and Lee real estate offices caved in but no one was in the building at the time.

Hazel Hawkins Hospital spokesman Tom Harn said six persons were treated in the emergency room for cuts and bruises, three were admitted with heart attacks and another was admitted for "anxiety."

"It knocked me right out of my chair," said Jim Iverson, a California Highway Patrolman in Salinas, about 20 miles southwest of the epicenter. "At first it was a buckling motion and then it felt like we were rowing."

At Henry Coe State Park, a few miles north and high above the epicenter, park ranger Barry Breckling said "It felt like the house was going to shake apart."

At Lick Observatory, atop Mount Hamilton, Barbara Cook, a clerk, said, "I thought at first someone had hit the building with a car, but then the floor kept moving and we realized it was an earthquake."

Across the valley in the Santa Cruz Mountains, a Felton woman who had just gotten out of a leg cast fell to the ground when the quake rolled by, re-injuring her leg.

At KFAT-FM radio station in Gilroy, employees raced out of the building when cassette

wood City, animals gathered with like species — zebras with zebras and giraffes with giraffes — throughout the quake, according to spokeswoman Mary O'Herron. Llamas, cougars, tigers and elephants all had exhibited restless behavior before the temblor, she said.

Scientist Robert DeMaret said he got "quite a ride" on the catwalk around Shiva, the world's most powerful laser, at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. Shiva was knocked out of alignment for about 45 seconds but was back on target, undamaged, when the shaking ceased.

At General Electric's Vallecitos Nuclear Center, which sits in an area laced with fault lines, an inspection team that took readings throughout the facility said there was no damage.

While the USGS at Menlo Park, which has about 20 measuring devices along the stretch of the Calaveras Fault that slipped Monday, said the quake measured 6.0, others came up with close but different readings.

The University of California at Berkeley said it measured 5.9 and the USGS National Earthquake Center in Golden, Colo., said it was 5.7.

An earthquake of 6.0 can cause severe damage depending on the slope of the land, the nature of the fault and the immediate population.

The Calaveras Fault, which runs from Hollister through Walnut Creek to Danville, had its last major earthquake on July 11, 1911. Although seismographic equipment had not yet been invented, scientists estimate that the quake would have measured 6.6 on the Richter scale.

The last sharp temblor in the Bay Area occurred in Daly City in 1957. It measured 5.3 on the Richter scale. The great San Francisco earthquake of 1906 has been estimated at 8.3.

USGS seismologists Monday placed additional measuring devices in the area of the epicenter, Lester said, adding that because of an abundance of seismic equipment in the area, scientists believe the San Martin quake will provide them with valuable information about the cause of earthquakes, perhaps aiding them in attempting to forecast future quakes — an unrefined science.

*Other reporters contributing to this story include: Mark Saylor, Dale Rodebaugh, Bill Glines, Bob Levy, Ken Peterson, Dennis Rockstroh, Ed Hering, Elias Castillo, Karen Klinger, Christopher Drake, Bill Romano, Tom Harris and Susan Ager.*