

# Awareness And Involvement Prevailed

First Of Six Articles  
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It began — a decade that saw America in civil disorder, its loyalty divided by the Vietnam war; its energy resources questioned by scientists but accepted by the man at the gas pump; its people beginning to flex new-found environmental muscle at state, county and neighborhood levels.

It endured as a decade that absorbed the trauma of Watergate and the unique resignation of a president who quit under threat of impeachment. American celebrated its 200th anniversary, contemplatively.

The decade ends with a feeling of national unity generated by the Iran crisis; a national paycheck yearly losing its clout to inflation; gas prices soaring on odd-even days; growth control measures and a rise of neo-conservatism directed against government costs and bureaucratic controls.

Look back ten years.

It's 1970, and campus demonstrations across the nation — Berkeley, Kent State, staid Stanford and infant UCSC — pour into city streets. In Santa Cruz and other cities, Army draft buses are held hostage by anti-war demonstrators; at Isla Vista and elsewhere in these United States, the

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Bank of America is rocked by terrorist bombs.

At shopping centers, Americans are soothing their politics-torn nerves with coffee at 77 cents a pound and stocking their freezers with ground beef at three pounds for \$1.59.

There are no gas lines at service stations where attendants fill the tank and motorists drive in any day of the week to buy regular at 36.9 cents a gallon.

Newcomers can buy such houses as a three-bedroom home on one "fenced" acre, replete with covered patios and swimming pool in plush Pasatiempo for \$37,500.

The prime rate is 8 percent at the beginning of the year and drops to slightly under 7 percent by the end of 1970.

Yet, economists are quoted in headlines: "Consumers Paid More, Bought Less."

It is the year that large capital interests innocently plan to build a Hilton hotel at Lighthouse Field, a village complex along the north coast and a nuclear power plant north of the village, two miles above Davenport.

The men behind the plans fail to see that in an also innocent "Spring Fair" in downtown Santa Cruz, there is the ecological will that before the decade ends will turn their projects into

History  
public parks and coastal zone lands.

The nascent environmental movement celebrated on the newly-dedicated Pacific Avenue Mall is destined to carry a platoon of politicians to office in the '70s, producing its most successful young leader, county Supervisor Gary Patton.

The Pacific Avenue Mall remains in the news and by 1979 is the home of a new breed of nomads, the street people who carry on for lost generations bums, beatniks and hippies.

"Hippie Pollution" is a headline in early 1970, expressing the establishment's anxiety as the young dropouts and workless class take on new symbols that accrue automatically when they discard combs, ties, razors, shoes and bras.

Drugs, rock festivals and nudity disturb and challenge traditional values. In Santa Cruz, Councilwoman Anne Garni asks for an ordinance banning topless dancing and subsequently will not allow it to be read in public as it's "too explicit and I couldn't ask a secretary to type that," Garni said.

In 1970, there are about 124,000 persons in this county living in 50,000 homes. During the ensuing 10 years, 56,000 more persons will become county residents and somewhere around 24,000 homes will be built.

There are 79,000 acres of harvestable farmlands, but by 1978, 13,000 of those will be lost.

The Santa Cruz economy sustains a serious blow in 1970 when the Sylvania plant closes, and 300 employees seek work elsewhere with the company or with another company. Toward the end of the decade, a few other moderate-sized companies pick up the slack.

As the decade unwinds, it uniquely demonstrates that early principles of economics no longer hold and that unemployment and inflation can increase simultaneously.

The county experiences a decade of demand by the poor for a greater share of the public purse as inflation cuts into welfare and fixed incomes.

It was the decade of environmental concerns, an age of ecology that remained when the Age of Aquarius dried up.

In 1970, the California Environmental Quality Act passed, and the Friends of Mammoth court suit in 1972 spread the environmental impact report requirement to private developers. Subsequent law wrote it into general planning.

Two years later, the people of California with Proposition 20, the Coastal Initiative, take the coastline  
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# Awareness And Involvement Prevailed During The 1970s

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away from local planning control, saying it is too important an asset to control on the basis that it is a state, national and world resource.

Economy and ecology merge when tax cuts are allowed for land owners who are willing to restrict use of their acreage to agriculture, open space and timber growing.

By 1978, environmentalist Patton,

with a lot of help, brings growth management to the unincorporated area of the county with Measure J. The city of Santa Cruz follows with Measure O.

But, all in all, nothing changes this decade-enduring headline: "San Lorenzo River Polluted."

Nor can the sand bar build-up at the Yacht Harbor be solved.

Nor can Mid-County find a way to

incorporate, or forget about trying.

Nor can the conservatives or the liberals manage to consistently maintain political power.

With the increasing population — which more than doubled from 1960 to 1980 — stores and services had to be built. In 1970, Sears got the go-ahead to build its store on 41st Avenue — the first large unit in the Capitola Mall area.

Mid-County gets a connection to the Santa Cruz City sewer plant, community parks are created in the south county and San Lorenzo Valley, and the senior citizens get a couple of centers to bring them together.

Downtown Santa Cruz gets a county community center — Laurel Center — that in 1979 is given the name of Loudon Nelson, a man who was born a slave, freed and came to Santa Cruz. Nelson bequeathed his land to the school system.

The county begins building its new jail at the end of the decade, ending eight years of political warfare over incarceration versus rehabilitation programs.

There were paradoxes:

In 1970, Gov. Ronald Reagan loses a battle to cut taxes, and the people vote in liberals thereafter. Ultimately, the people resort to the Jarvis Initiative to cut taxation at county and state levels.

In 1970, Tom Hayden is sentenced in the Chicago Seven trial, and Jane Fonda is arrested for kicking a customs official. They meet, marry, lead the political movement called the Campaign for Economic Democracy; they advised Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 1979 to appoint Chris Matthews of Watsonville to the county Board of

Supervisors.

A member of the Weathermen, a militant anti-war group, comes to Santa Cruz, enters the political process and now leads a major community service.

The co-founder of the first alternative newspaper in Santa Cruz, "The Free Spaghetti Dinner," goes on to sell computers for a major firm.

The U.S. Senate in 1970 investigates the death of Mary Jo Kopechne at Chappaquiddick, and columnist Andrew Tulley writes "Kennedy Writes His Epitaph." In 1979, the draft Ted Kennedy campaign kicks off around the nation and here in Santa Cruz.

It is 1970, and the Aptos Seascope Corp. gets its permit for a motel complex, and County Planning Director Bert Muhly resigns, partly because of that board decision. In 1979, Aptos Seascope is back in the news. It wins a court suit and the county reaches an agreement with the company that becomes a political issue in the unsuccessful recall election of Supervisor Marilyn Liddicoat.

Cabrillo College hires Joe Marvin as an assistant football coach, and 10 years later, he coaches the Seahawks into their-first ever state championship game.

First child of the year — to begin

the decade of ERA — was a girl, Sarah Monique Ferguson of Ben Lomond.

Route 4, the connective link of Highway 1 through Santa Cruz, is considered, opposed and dropped.

It is predicted that by 1980, UCSC will have 12,000 students, but it only makes it to about half that number.

Holy Cross High School closes, and the San Lorenzo Valley gets door-to-door mail service in later 1970.

Mass murderer Charles Manson goes to trial, and his evil visits Santa Cruz later that year. Mass slayings earn Santa Cruz the press label "The Murder Capital of the World." All three murderers will be considered for parole, and be denied, before the end of the decade.

Jeanne Dixon predicts in "troubled times and scandal in government is coming."

County Supervisors' Chairman Henry Mello predicted in late 1969 that the environment would be the major issue of the 1970s.

Today, the decade is described by this area's congressman, Leon Panetta: "The 70s were a time of awareness, but postponement; we saw the problems, they were postponed and the crises are now."

