

The Job Outlook

The job outlook in Santa Cruz County has improved considerably since the April employment report, but we still have far too many people without jobs.

Unemployment in June totaled 4,700 persons as compared with 5,300 in April and 4,400 a year ago June.

Total employment soared from April with 44,900 persons at work, an increase of 2,200 jobs, but the gain for the year was only 100 jobs.

In this regard it is rather interesting to note that the labor force increase in the past year totals only 400, a gain of .8 of one per cent with a total labor force of 49,600.

We would suspect that the slight increase in the labor force, apparently well below the population increase of the past year, is due to the the unsettled economic conditions with a number of persons voluntarily staying out of the labor market because there are so few jobs.

This condition may also be reflected in the fact that a higher than average number of students may have stayed out of the labor force, simply because they felt there were not enough jobs and they might as well enjoy a non-voluntary vacation period.

However, the fact that we did gain a lot of jobs in the past couple of months is encouraging.

The general trend in the central coast-

al area is much the same. For example, in Santa Clara County in June there were 462,800 persons at work, an increase of 3,900 jobs in the past year, but the number of unemployed jumped from 27,300 in June of 1970 to 32,300 this year, an increase of 5,000.

From a percentage point of view the gain in employment was only .8 of one per cent while the increase in the number of jobless was a fearsome 18.3 per cent. The unemployment rate in Santa Clara County was 6.3 per cent compared to 9.5 per cent in Santa Cruz County.

Monterey County had an unemployment rate of 6 per cent, but there, too, the year-to-year change was disappointing. Monterey County had 89,300 jobs, an increase of 200 while unemployment was almost unchanged, 5,700 this year compared to 5,600 last June.

In San Benito County adverse weather conditions held back farm employment so that the County had only 6,700 jobs in June compared to 7,000 a year ago while unemployment remained the same, 1,300 or 16.2 per cent.

There were few changes in the number of people employed in various segments of the economy in Santa Cruz County during the past year. Construction work held at 2,200 workers, manufacturing dropped from 6,500 to 6,100 while public utilities remained unchanged at

1,400. We gained 200 jobs in retail trade for a total of 7,200 workers with 900 (unchanged) employed in wholesale trade.

Finance, real estate and insurance remained the same at 1,100 workers with a gain of 100 workers in the service field for a total of 5,900. Government workers increased from 7,700 to 8,400 to lead all fields of endeavor, while agricultural employment dropped from 6,200 to 5,700.

For the first time in history the number of people employed by government in the County has exceeded all other forms of employment. For years retail and wholesale trade have been our largest employer.

In June there were 8,400 at work in government, 8,100 in retail and wholesale trade, 6,100 in manufacturing, 5,900 in services and 5,700 in agriculture.

We would estimate that the job picture has improved slightly from the June report from the Department of Human Resources, but that we still have not been able to reduce unemployment by any major degree.

Good weather has bolstered business in the recreation field and to some degree in retail activity, but there have been few changes in manufacturing employment and the service field.

However, even a slight gain in jobs can be considered an improvement over the 1970 employment year.