

Local EQ-1989-S.C. County-Rebuilding

Help's available to save area's historic buildings

By JENNIFER SASSEEN
STAFF WRITER

Owners of historic buildings damaged in the Oct. 17 earthquake can now get some help in saving their buildings from state and federal historic-preservation programs.

State Assemblyman Sam Farr announced the news at a press conference yesterday in front of the Octagon Museum in downtown Santa Cruz, along with Santa Cruz Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt, Bank of the West vice president Warren Grande and representatives of local and national historic-preservation organizations.

Farr described a new bill introduced by him in a special session of the Legislature and signed recently by the governor which protects historic buildings from demolition and allows local governments to apply to the state Office of Historic Preservation for help in restoration. State officials working with a local three-member committee will help assess damage, the historical significance of a building and the cost of rehabilitation.

"As a fifth generation Californian, I'm very proud of our history," Farr said, "and it's important that we protect it, enhance it and educate people about what our history has been."

The bill, which has already been enacted into law under an urgency statute, applies to structures listed on national, state or local historic registers. It permits demolition of those buildings only if there is an imminent threat to public safety or to an adjoining building.

The bill also provides funding and low-interest, deferred-payment loans for rehabilitation of rental properties and targets money for farm-worker housing.

In a separate move, the National Trust for Historic Preser-

vation is working to help provide low-interest loans to property owners seeking to stabilize their damaged buildings. The agency will subsidize the loan interest so participating banks can provide loans at 4 percent interest for the first 90 days, with no more than 8 percent interest charged for the first year of the loan.

Farr praised the loan program and said the big question for cities like Watsonville and Santa Cruz was how to pay restoration costs, yet keep buildings affordable so former tenants can return.

Kathryn Burns, regional director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said the loan program was established as an incentive to owners of historic property.

Doug Harbit, the trust's director of financial services, said no appraisals were required to qualify for the loans. He described the program as "probably one of the most flexible programs available to property owners of historic buildings."

Both the Pacific Garden Mall in Santa Cruz and downtown Watsonville, as well as portions of Aptos Village, are historic districts and their buildings are covered under the bill and the loan program.

Bank of the West, which has branches in the earthquake-stricken areas, is closest to setting up the loan program, but the National Trust for Historic Preservation will also work with other banks, Harbit said.

Wormhoudt said the city was "enormously grateful" for the assistance provided under the bill and the loan program, which she described as a "gift to the community" because it will help preserve the diversity of the mall.

"If all the buildings come down and we have to start over," Wormhoudt said, "we will have something very drab."

Earthquake relief



Photos by Mike McCollum

Graham Nash (left) and Steve Stills join in a number.

Legendary group hits right notes

By By RICHARD EGAN
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to raise community spirits as well as a little money, Crosby, Stills and Nash sent two very sold-out audiences into musical ecstasy last night at the Catalyst nightclub in Santa Cruz, with the proceeds benefitting local earthquake-relief agencies.

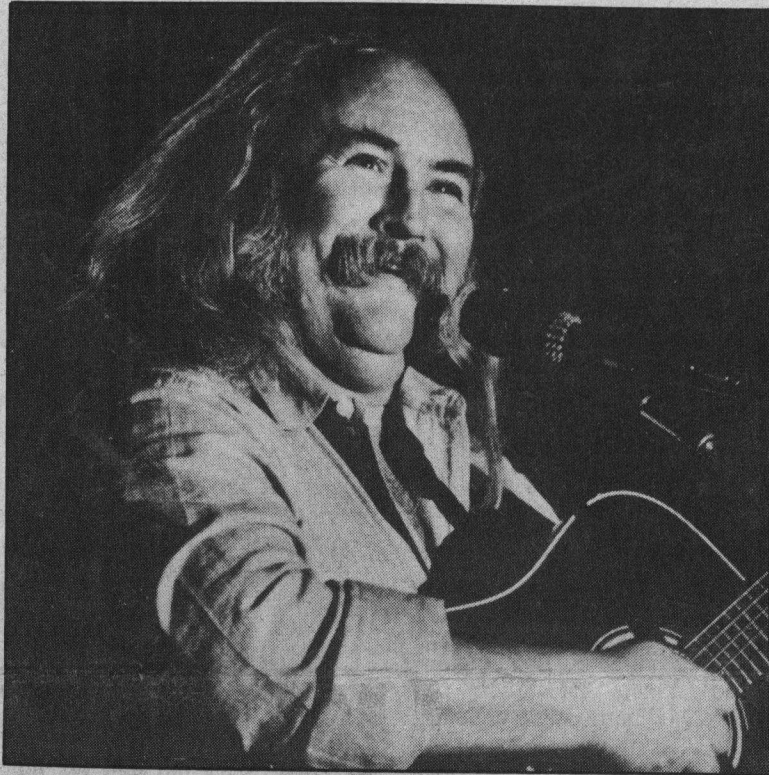
The early show got off to an emotional, if not a bit maudlin, start when Santa Cruz Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt urged the audience to "remember what the good times are" during the introduction to what was billed as a "Keep the Spirit Alive" concert.

But if there is a group that within itself has the ability to light a spark from the ashes and dust, it's CS&N. Lyrics that had dulled over the past 20 years suddenly hit home again with the smack of a palm on the forehead.

To say that David Crosby, Graham Nash and Steve Stills were in good voice would be an understatement. And no one could ask for a better venue — even those in the back could see Crosby's huge stomach jiggle.

After a few openers, including one from their "favorite group," the Beatles' "Blackbird," they each did a solo number. Nash, Mr. Nice Guy, did a new tune about a down-and-out friend.

The corpulent Crosby, who looks like an overweight lion, gave the show its first jolt of energy with a stirring rendition of "Almost Cut My Hair." That was followed by an amazingly intimate "Guinevere."



David Crosby enjoying himself.

Nash gave everyone a good laugh when he pointed to Crosby, who has recovered nicely from a well-documented history of drug abuse, and said "If he can make it back, so can Santa Cruz."

Stills, Mr. Talent, then ripped through "Midnight Rider" with his usual verve.

The three teamed up once again for a beautiful "Wooden Ships," with Stills reeling off a couple of nice leads on electric guitar, and then bid the crowd goodnight.

The first encore, "Our House," was dedicated to the Cooper House, demolished after the Oct. 17 earthquake, and the chorus was altered to "Our house, was a very, very fine house."

That was followed by an inspirational (is there any other kind?) "Suite Judy Blue Eyes," which resulted in about the fourth audience sing-along of the show.

The crowd brought them back one more time, and they responded with "Teach Your Children." It was so good it was kind of scary.

The second show was broadcast live on KUSP. The 800 tickets available for each show sold out in a matter of minutes earlier in the week.

All in all, a couple of shows, no matter how great, don't amount to a hill of bricks when it comes to making right the property and lives ruined by the earthquake. But it sure made everybody feel better about it for awhile.