

THE FLOODS OF FEBRUARY

Riverside County, 1980

Disaster took on a new definition in February for many residents of Riverside County.

Floods drove thousands from their homes in the cities of San Jacinto, Lake Elsinore and Palm Springs. Residents of many other rural communities in the western county were isolated for days by flood waters. There were 10 deaths related to the flooding. Property damage was expected to exceed \$70 million.

The following selected pages from The Press and The Enterprise reflect some of the drama and the ordeal of those days.

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Press

ENTERPRISE



Rain continued to wreak havoc throughout Southern California yesterday. Above, Steve Moore of Riverside is swept down the Santa Ana River near the Van Buren Bridge in Riverside as a

rescue helicopter waits to pull him to safety. Below, Moore is hugged by his wife, Laurie, after his rescue. For details and more photos of the rain's regional effects, see the County Page.

Storms deluge Southland with water, mud

The Associated Press Torrents of muddy water poured down hillsides and through homes in Southern California yesterday, washing cars and garages into the streets and forcing evacuations.

Police and fire emergency units were stretched to the limit, and widespread telephone and power outages were reported throughout many areas.

Persons trapped in areas where the streets had been transformed into swirling, muddy rivers were ferried to safety in helicopters.

Ventura County and the foothills of Los Angeles from the coast east to the San Gabriel Mountains were hardest hit by the Pacific storm.

Meantime, the National Weather Service said the latest storm dropped more than 2.60 inches of rain in the Los Angeles area, bringing the season total to 16.44. Normal rainfall for this date is only 9.33 inches.

And another one to two inches is expected to fall as an-

other storm sweeps in from the Pacific Monday afternoon, forecasters said.

In San Bernardino, a 3 1/2-square-mile area was evacuated when muddy waters began cascading over the top of Harrison Dam.

At least five auto deaths were attributed to the storm since Thursday. There were numerous reports of storm-related traffic accidents yesterday, including several jack-knifed or overturned trucks. Three persons were hurt, two critically, when three cars collided in Sherman Oaks yesterday.

In Laurel Canyon, a woman was hospitalized after her house slid off its foundation and into the street. Police Officer Lewis Lopez said the woman had been sleeping inside the house and was in a state of shock.

Two children were reported trapped in a house that collapsed in Topanga Canyon above the Pacific Coast Highway, and the torrential rains reportedly were undercutting foundations of some homes in the Pasadena area, Sherman Oaks, Calabasas, and Tujunga and Stone canyons.

Water-soaked hillsides oozed into homes.

Lakewood Doctors' Hospital reported a foot of water in the emergency room. Some flooding also reported in historical Ventura City Hall.

Above foothill communities, crews were working to keep debris from clogging flood-control basins and overflowing onto residential areas. But most were already reported on the verge of flooding, and authorities asked for volunteers to help sandbag around nearby homes.

The Los Angeles, Seppe and Santa Paula rivers and San Antonio Creek were cresting late yesterday, adding to the flood threat, officials said. A dike on the Santa Paula River threatened to break, endangering homes in the northern Oxnard area.

In Calabasas, a 500-foot section of hillside collapsed, threatening homes.

In the Laguna Beach area, parts of Laguna Canyon were reported under at least six feet of water and cars were washing down streets and furniture was floating inside houses. Phone service to the area was interrupted.

Thousands evacuated as floods hit Phoenix

The Associated Press Warned of the worst flooding in centuries, thousands of residents of Phoenix, Ariz., fled their homes yesterday while surging waters washed out roads and bridges and floated away cars.

Authorities ordered the evacuation of 11,000 people along the normally dry river beds running through Phoenix, an area of 1.5 million people.

Eight of the 10 bridges spanning the Salt River in its 20-mile run through Phoenix were closed and none of the surface crossings were passable.

With one-half of the city virtually shut off from the other half, about 650 National Guardsmen patrolled evacuated neighborhoods.

Gov. Bruce Babbitt ordered a state of emergency Friday night as authorities kept an eye on the Stewart Mountain Dam which holds back the 10-mile-long Saguaro Lake about 20 miles east of Phoenix.

After a helicopter flight yesterday with state legislators over the metropolitan area, Babbitt told reporters that "damage thus far is relatively limited."

"I think it's still prudent to assume the worst," Babbitt said

yesterday with a new rainstorm moving into the state that could add another 3 inches to the 6 inches which had fallen by Friday night.

Phoenix firefighters rescued a Florida trucker who "went to sleep Friday night high and dry and woke up surrounded," a spokesman said.

"He was brought out through water higher than his head," the spokesman said.

An exception was the far west side of the Salt River Valley which showed "tremendous spreading" of water from the rushing rivers, he told a news conference.

Maricopa County Civil Defense officials estimated 400 homes damaged in communities on the west and southwest sides of Phoenix, where the Agua Fria and Salt rivers join.

In Phoenix, the Salt River was flowing at about 170,000 cubic feet per second at mid-morning. In December 1978, when hundreds of homes were inundated on the city's southwest side in what the weather service called a "100-year flood," the flow was measured at 135,000 cubic feet per second.



Iran says panel only first step in hostages' freedom

The Associated Press The president of Iran, apparently taking a hard new line on the release of the American hostages, said in a telecast yesterday that they might be released only after the United States "undertakes its obligations" to Iran.

Among the obligations, President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr said, was the "return" of exiled Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi from Panama. He had said in the past that the United States would have to agree not to block Iran's efforts to return the shah and his wealth. In recent days he had not said the

return of the shah was a condition for the hostages' release.

In an interview broadcast over Greek television, Bani-Sadr said the hostages would not be freed until the commission delivered its findings and the United States then acted.

"Then we shall see," he said.

He said on the Hellenic Radio and Television broadcast that the other obligations are U.S. acknowledgement of alleged U.S. crimes against the Iranian people during the shah's rule and a pledge not to interfere in Iranian affairs.

Meanwhile, at the United Nations, U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim worked on details of a five-member commission to investigate Iran's grievances against the deposed shah. Waldheim's spokesman said the panel could be named today or tomorrow.

In the interview, conducted in French, Bani-Sadr also said Iran's ruling Revolutionary Council had reviewed proposed members of the international commission and had approved them. He gave no names or other details. The Athens announcer did not say when the interview was held, but it was believed to have been Friday.

Special for Sunday

INVESTOR'S FRIEND — Gold and silver are nabbing the headlines, but diamonds are also being grabbed up by persons seeking a hedge against inflation. Page D-1.

SEARCH CONTINUES — A former medical examiner is still attempting to learn the identity of a boy who died 23 years ago. Page A-6.

BOX LADY — Poullette Priest of Rubidoux devotes her life to helping the poor by fixing up what others throw away. Page E-1.

PRISON RIOT — Order is restored at the California Institution for Men following an extensive vandalism spree during a power outage. County Page.

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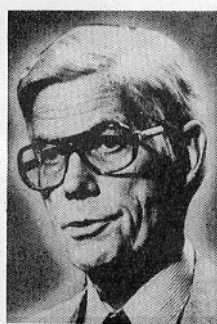
Anderson's support outside party seen as more than within GOP

By TONY SCHWARTZ New York Times Special Features

"Saturday Night Live," touchstone of the young and hip, introduced Republican presidential candidate John B. Anderson on the show last month and the audience went wild. Longtime liberal philanthropist Stewart Mott threw a party for Anderson in his spacious Fifth Avenue apartment and Kurt Vonnegut stopped by. In Beverly Hills, Norman Lear and Gore Vidal showed up to meet the candidate. Democrats and independents have been flocking to his fundraisers.

Two years ago Illinois congressman John B. Anderson decided to run for the Republican presidential nomination, calling the other contenders "the bland leading the bland." In recent weeks this fiscally conservative "born-again progressive," who bluntly admits that if elected he "would do the things that would make me a one-term president," has emerged as a favorite of Democrats, independents and students — and perhaps as a viable dark horse.

In one place since a building was taken over in 1969. A couple of days later, in pure '60s "Clean for Gene" style, four busloads of students rode up to New Hampshire to knock on doors for Anderson. John Anderson is an unexpected hero. The 58-year-old candidate is a deeply religious, fiscally conservative congressman from the die-hard Republican town of Rockford, Ill., a man who received a zero rating from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action during his first term in



John B. Anderson Republican presidential candidates: George Romney, Nelson Rockefeller, William Scranton, Pete McCloskey.

Weather

WESTERN — Heavy rain. Highs in upper 50s.
DESERT — Heavy rain. Highs in lower 60s.
EXTENDED FORECAST — More rain, heavy at times, expected through Thursday.

Floodwaters force 150 from homes; more rain due



Staff photo by A.J. Kmiecik

Webb Street, in the Jurupa area community of Jamestown, is more like Webb Lake this morning.

More than 150 Riverside County residents — most of them from Palm Springs and Corona — were evacuated from their homes today after storms dumped more rain on the already saturated county.

Sunny skies blossomed this morning, but clouds returned by noon, and the county braced for still another wave of heavy rain, this one forecast to begin tonight. At least 22 roads were either closed or barely passable because of mud and water. County disaster preparedness officials today predicted the past week's storm damage would surpass \$1 million. They plan to ask the Board of Supervisors to seek a state declaration of emergency from Gov. Brown tomorrow.

Disaster preparedness officials began soliciting public and

This story was written by Dan Bernstein with reports from staffers Chris Bowman, Terry Colvin, Iris Hayward, Lorie Hearn, Mike Kataoka, Bob Larrick, Carla Lazzareschi, Bill McKenna, Herb Pasik, James Richardson, Darrell Santschi, Tim Skrove and Scott Zonder.

private damage estimates. Farms and roads have been especially hard hit, and are expected to push the costs of the storm above the \$1 million mark, according to Donald Edwards, the assistant county director of disaster preparedness.

In Riverside, rushing flood waters forced the Gage Canal Co. to double the amount of water being released from Mockingbird Canyon Lake. A section of the Riverside Canal, first damaged last week, was washed away and replaced by a water-spewing gully.

John Blank, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service station at UCR, said the brunt of tonight's storm will pass north of the area but could drop another inch of rain. Another storm of about the same intensity was forecast for tomorrow night. Blank said that could be the caboose on the train of storms that has drenched the area since last Wednesday.

The series of storms has dumped 5.26 inches of rain on Riverside since Wednesday and more than seven inches in Corona and other western county locations.

Flood control officials said the outlook was grim. "The ground is totally saturated at this point," Douglas Isbell, a county flood operations supervisor said today. He said Santa Ana River levees were intact, however, and the river itself was "well below" flooding levels.

Andrew Sienkiewicz, chief of reservoir regulation for the Army Corps of Engineers, agreed that the Santa Ana River was no immediate threat to flood but added: "Almost any water course in the county is potentially in trouble. It depends on how much rain we get and how fast it comes down."

To date, three deaths have been linked to the storms. The latest casualty was Donna Chandler, who died yesterday at Desert Hospital in Palm Springs after being thrown from an automobile driven by her husband. The car ran into a washed-out section of road around noon.

Robert Horrigan, director of the county's disaster preparedness office said that 100 residents in southeast Palm Springs were evacuated from their homes this morning.

Early this morning, county sheriffs deputies evacuated about 40 people from La Corona Trailer Park in Corona, on the edge of the Temescal Wash.

And still another evacuation — an airlift of four asthmatic children from Tualota Canyon near Hemet — was planned by the National Guard today, county officials said. Roads to the canyon area have been washed out by the rains, and the children need medical attention, Horrigan said.

Rain caused further damage to graves at the Riverside National Cemetery on Van Buren

(See FLOODING, Page B-2)

Irate flood victims make night call on supervisor

By SANDY PAVICIC
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
About 75 angry water-soaked Jamestown residents gathered at Supervisor Donald Schroeder's home late last night to confront him with their flooding problems. "We want a room to stay in," several people shouted when

Schroeder appeared barefoot in the rain outside his door. "Our homes are flooded!"

Some swore and shouted insults at the supervisor. They threatened to have him recalled, offered to take him out to their homes to see the flooding firsthand. "You wouldn't even make

a damn good dog catcher," one woman screamed.

"We want to know what you're going to do about it," one man yelled. "If you're not going to do anything we'll put in for a recall."

"You people can do anything you want," Schroeder snapped

back. "You're like a pack of animals. Why don't you just go home?"

"Because we don't have homes!" several persons shouted.

Jamestown is a little community in the Jurupa area that was built in a lake bottom about 30

years ago. The neighborhood is so low that storm culverts serving the area don't carry the water away.

Several in the crowd began quieting their neighbors and, when relative peace was established, Schroeder listened as they told him about the problems they suffered because of the flooding. Many said they have lost thousands of dollars worth of carpeting and household belongings. Mail has not been delivered in the neighborhood since the rains began. Neighborhood children have not attended school because their parents won't send them wading through waist-deep water to get to Van Buren School across the street from the community.

Sheriff's deputies, who arrived at Schroeder's house shortly after the residents, asked the crowd to move off his property into the street. Then Schroeder stood on the curb in the rain and told them about a \$250,000 community development grant that was allocated this year for a new storm drain in Jamestown to alleviate the flooding.

"The money is allocated," Schroeder said. He said he has tried to take measures to help them. "I talked to the road commissioner three times last week," he said. After about a half an hour, the crowd began disbanding. Several of the people who had arrived angry were crying.

"We said all we can say," sobbed Jean McCray. "We're not vicious. We're just hurt. When you wade in water up to your knees and see everything you've worked for gone, somebody has to listen."

Many of the residents have had several inches of water in their homes since Wednesday.

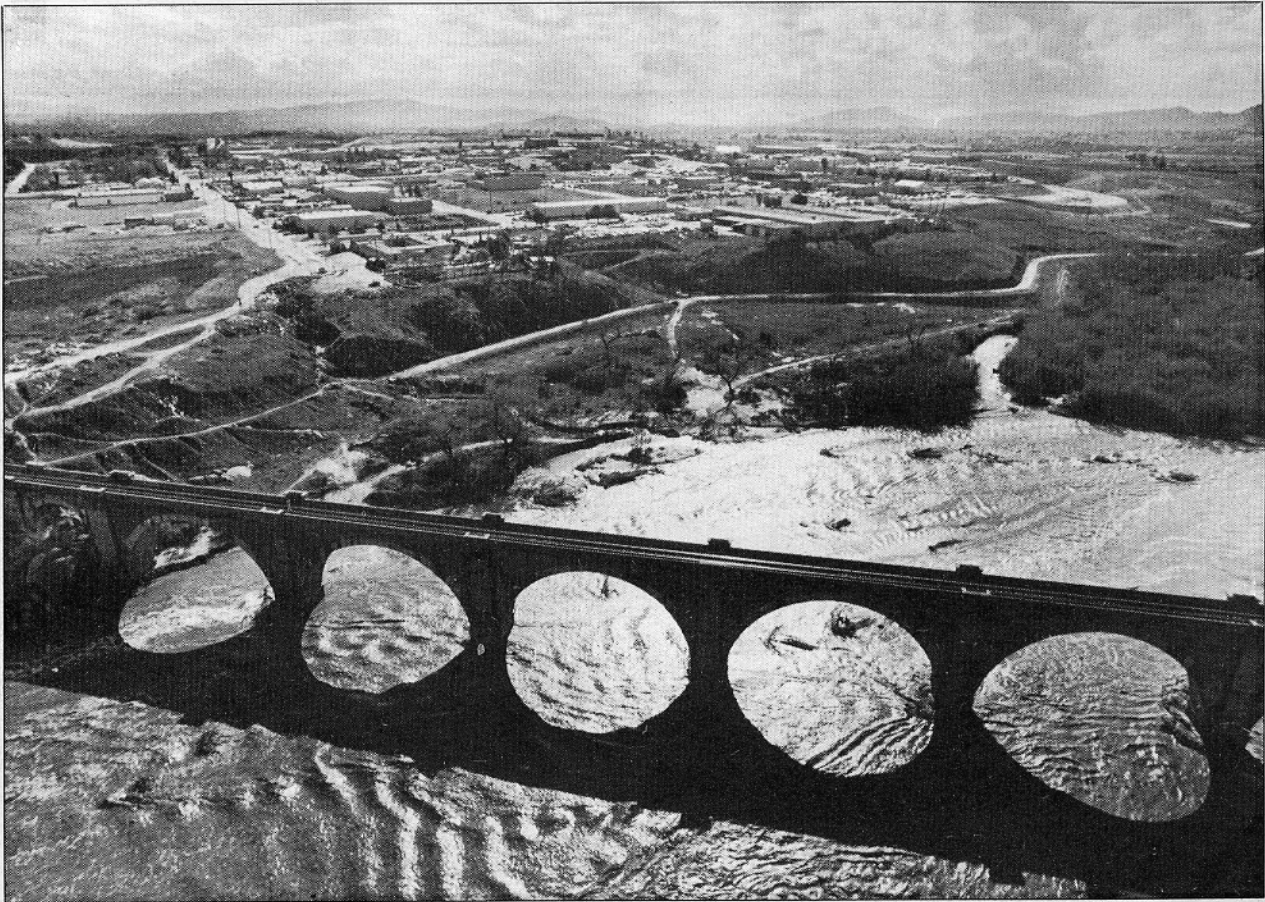
Water is waist deep in some places in Jamestown. The resi- (See IRATE, Page B-2)



Staff photo by Sean Brady

County Supervisor Donald Schroeder was roused from bed by angry Jamestown residents who went to his house to complain

There had been some rain in January, but none in February until the 13th. Then the storms began, including a streak of nine consecutive days of rain. Floods followed, and with them came incidents of heroism and tragedy.



Sun sparkles off flood-swollen Santa Ana River yesterday as it flows under bridge built by the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake RR, later taken over by Union Pacific.



A break in the northern San Jacinto River levee has caused flooding in the Hemet area.

Staff photos by A.J. Kmiecik, Pat O'Brien and Iris Hayward



Water levels at Lake Elsinore are reaching record highs.

Water, water everywhere

Water was everywhere yesterday in Riverside County as runoff coursed from the mountains, from hillsides and from high ground. The Santa Ana River, often a dry, sandy riverbed, was filled with water, bank to bank. A levee on the San Jacinto River had broken, and floodwater was streaming across parts of the Hemet-San Jacinto Valley. In Lake Elsinore, the day-use section of the state park was under water. Water from the Temescal Wash tore away sections of Old Magnolia Avenue in Corona.



Floodwaters have torn away pavement on Old Magnolia Avenue.

Owners helpless as home teeters on brink of river

By ELAINE HAITE
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
NORCO — "It's a shame, a house like that going down the drain," William Borner Sr. said yesterday as the rain-swollen Santa Ana River 100-foot below chiseled away at the bluffs beneath his son's home.

The younger Borner and his family were rousted out of bed about 2 a.m. Sunday when a

raging power pole fell into the raging torrent below. Their neighbors rallied to help them evacuate their house, taking everything with them that wasn't attached to the walls.

Yesterday they were coming back for the refrigerator and a few other items. Other than that the house stands empty. Windows smashed out and doors unhinged to make the moving simpler and quicker.

The Borners bought the split-level home at the corner of River Drive and Woodward Avenue six years ago. They added on some rooms and redecorated the interior. Outside they landscaped and put in patios, waterfalls and ponds. Yesterday, the waterfalls were gone and only one pond remained. The rest had fallen into the river.

A stone walkway heading away from the house was broken off about five feet from the back porch. Nearby, trees were poised, ready to tumble into the muddy river.

In recent weeks, the Borners had watched the river chew away a 50-foot chunk from the rear of their half-acre lot until all that remained was several feet between the house and the side of the cliff.

They had intended to move Sunday, according to neighbor Thelma Wilson, but not in the middle of the night.

While some of the other neighbors are concerned about their homes, no one else had moved out yet. If the Borner's house goes, Wilson said she might move, too.

Even before this happened, Wilson said she and her husband had decided to put their house up for sale. It was to be listed yesterday. The Borners' misfortune may hurt their chances to sell, she said.

Norval Papke, Borner's uncle, said he stood at the house Sunday and watched the bluffs break off three and four feet at a time.

Despite the danger, spectators continued to gather on the river bank to peer down into the muddy, swirling waterway. City officials were in the process of erecting a fence to keep people off the bank and out of danger.

Where to call

If you have flooding problems, here's where to call:

Rubidoux: Rubidoux Fire Station, 683-4561.

Glen Avon: Fire Station, 685-5109.

Pedley: Fire Station, 685-6382.

West Riverside: 685-5260.

Riverside: Public Services, 787-7251.

Valley . . .

(Continued from Page B-3) are going to hold out until we have to swim out," she said.

Hemet-San Jacinto

Flood-weary residents of the San Jacinto Valley began digging out from a weekend storm.

Hardest hit in the weekend rains were the communities of Gilman Hot Springs, north of San Jacinto, Sage, south of Hemet, and Green Acres, north of Winchester.

Even as residents and county crews packed more than 5,000 sandbags to protect valley homes yesterday, the San Jacinto River, at its highest level in 42 years, was continuing to rise.

About one-third of the 27-hole golf course at Gilman Hot Springs was under water yesterday after the earthen levee on the north side of the San Jacinto River was washed away Friday night.

Water yesterday morning was running about one foot below the San Jacinto River bridge crossing near Cranston Ranger Station on Highway 74. Leroy Waltrip, supervisor of the California Department of Transportation maintenance yard in San Jacinto, said it was the highest he had seen it since he started work here in 1962.

Nuevo

Leaks were found yesterday in a reservoir dam at Crystal Springs Ranch in Nuevo. County firefighters and sheriff's deputies started precautionary evacuation of nearby homes in the area, eight miles east of Perris. Officials feared the dam would break and send an estimated 300,000 gallons of water spilling down the north slope of Lakeview Mountain.

Water began leaking from the foot of the dam early yesterday, and by 2:30 p.m. three separate streams flowed from under the earthen embankment.

Canyon Lake

At Canyon Lake, between Sun City and Lake Elsinore, water ran nearly three feet deep across an interior causeway and Railroad Canyon Road near the east entrance to the private resort community.



Mark Lackey, 6, Matthew Lackey, 9, Tammy Kaminsky, 14, and Stacy Kaminsky, 12, give a sigh of relief while being airlifted by

helicopter from flooded areas southeast of Rancho California. Behind Mark is the boys' grandfather, J.R. Hubert.

Guard's airlift aids stranded residents

By CARLA LAZZARESCI
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

Jeanne Hubert watched the helicopter until it disappeared. All weekend long she had worried about her daughter's family and the dozen other ranch families marooned in the rolling hills southeast of Rancho California, where roads had been obliterated by Friday's storms.

And now — yesterday afternoon — aid was on its way. Bags of food and 70 bales of hay were being airlifted to the stranded families and their animals. And four asthmatic children would soon arrive at Rancho California airport and run into the arms of their anxious relatives.

Operation Hayfever, some jokingly called it. But, so what? They had pulled it off.

The CH-47 airlift was a mini-drama whose cast included the young manager of a new radio station in Temecula, a persistent bureaucrat in the county's disaster preparedness office and Col. James Jones of the 40th Infantry Division of the Army National Guard in Los Alamitos.

According to Donald Edwards, assistant director of the county disaster preparedness office, the drama began unfolding Friday afternoon when families along Benton Road, southeast of Rancho California, realized that the storm had cut them off from the rest of the world.

The calls began coming into radio station KRMT and manager Stephen Hill appointed himself to find help. Hill called Edwards asking for help in getting food and hay to the families. In turn, Edwards called the state Office of Emergency Services and requested a helicopter airlift.

On Saturday morning the answer was "no." The state had not recognized Riverside County as an official "emergency" area.

But with the additional weekend storms, Edwards, again with Hill's prodding, sought state help yesterday morning.

Sandy and William Champion, who raise quarter horses in the marooned area, had volunteered to distribute hay to their neighbors — if it could be airlifted. Laurel and Jerry Picarella, the managers of Indian Oaks Trailer Park, volunteered to distribute food.

Laurel Picarella also mentioned she had two asthmatic sons — Matthew, 9, and Mark, 6 — who needed to be close to medical treatment. And, she added, there were two teen-age girls down the road with asthma. If the food and hay came in, she asked, could the children go?

Edwards awakened Col. Jones yesterday morning with his call for aid. And by 10 a.m. the mission was scheduled.

At 12:15 p.m., the fully loaded chopper took off.



Staff photos by Fred Bauman

Hay that was airlifted in by an Army National Guard helicopter is unloaded at the Champion quarter horse ranch.

Despite the rain, vacationers at desert spas keep smiling



Helen and Julius Harwood of New York City, vacationing in Desert Hot Springs, remain in good spirits despite the rainy weather.

By TIM SKROVE
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
DESERT HOT SPRINGS — Clouds piled high on the San Jacinto Mountains yesterday, putting a cool pallor on afternoon sunshine filtering onto swimming pools and spas filled with this resort town's famous mineral water.

Bess Goldetsky, vacationing here from Minnesota, seemed good-natured about that, however. "What can you do? It's better than St. Paul!"

Up to her neck in the swimming pool at the Ponce de Leon Hotel, Helen Rappaport, vacationing for the sixth time with her husband, Herman, in Desert Hot Springs, said, "It was two days windy, and two days pretty nice. And now it has been raining since last Wednesday."

But she said, "It's God's act, there's nothing you're going to do about it!"

The Rappaports, from Skokie, Ill., estimated their three-week vacation here will cost about \$2,000, but they are not disappointed with so much foul weather.

"It's still very nice," Helen Rappaport said. Husband Herman added, "If we have sun, that's a plus."

And besides, she added, "This isn't cold. It's beautiful."

This month starts the beginning of the busiest tourist season, according to one hotel and spa owner, and many tourists travel here each winter from colder climes to languish in the hot, mineral-laden water that many believe has medicinal qualities.

Julius and Helen Harwood, from New York City, said they would have been happier if the

weather had been a little nicer. But Helen Harwood said, "Neither of us felt too good when we got here. Now, we are both feeling chipper."

Like the Harwoods, a number of tourists vacationing at Desert Hot Springs resorts said yesterday they have been little concerned about the clouds and slapped desert and coastal areas with heavy rains over the past week.

A number of stalwart souls remained immersed yesterday

even as the sun was setting behind cloud-covered mountains, and what many Southern Californians would consider a chilly wind rippled the water in pools and spas.

Nancy Romer, the owner of the Desert Inn Resort and Spa, said some of the tourists at her 50-room establishment have even managed to get sunburns during the past few days.

And she added, "We have had people sitting in the pools with the steam going up and the rain pouring down. It's like a hot

tub effect . . . It's really nice." But Romer admitted the recent rains have cut off perhaps 20 percent of her resort's business.

Some tourists scheduled to come to Desert Inn Resort and Spa haven't been able to make it because of foul weather in other areas like Los Angeles and Phoenix. And at least two large groups have canceled scheduled trips because of the rain.

But some other guests have decided to stay on a little longer because of the new vacancies.



Helen and Herman Rappaport enjoy the pool facilities during their three-week stay.

Damage toll mounts; storms expected through week

By DAN BERNSTEIN
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
Riverside County residents continued to slog through a punishing series of rainstorms — storms that have killed people, forced hundreds of residents from their homes and inflicted millions of dollars in damage.
As the storm completed its first week, there was no relief in sight. Heavy rains were forecast through the end of the week.
Gov. Brown, who suspended his presidential campaign to inspect storm-ravaged Southern

California today, declared a state of emergency in the county.
Three people, one of them a 22-month-old girl, are dead. An El Cerrito woman has been missing for six days, apparently swept down Temescal Wash. More than 400 people have been evacuated from their homes, including some Palm Springs residents who were forced to leave their homes twice. Nearly all evacuees in Palm Springs and Corona had returned to their homes today.
Corona Municipal Airport,

half its runway under water, was evacuated.
Stretches of some county roads have completely disappeared, stranding motorists, isolating residents, and, in one case, necessitating a National Guard airlift of asthmatic children in need of medical attention.
County disaster preparedness officials said the most severe flooding damage has occurred in Palm Springs, along the San Jacinto River near Gilman Hot Springs, and in the Murietta Creek area.

A.E. "Jack" Newcomb, the county road commissioner, said today that county roads alone had suffered between \$4 and \$5 million in damage since Jan. 29. Ninety-one county roads have been closed, he said.
The county Board of Supervisors this morning ratified board chairman Alfred McCandless' earlier declaration of a state of emergency.
Robert Horrigan, director of the county's disaster preparedness office, and state and federal officials will inspect the county

tomorrow to determine whether the county has incurred enough damage to warrant a presidential declaration of a major disaster. Such an action would make federal money available to repair damages.
Since the relentless wave of storms began last week:
✓ Frank Wilson McCain, 87, drowned in his Wildomar backyard.
✓ Lavejon Sellers, a 22-month-old Rubidoux girl, was killed when she was thrown from her father's car, which veered

out of control in rain-drenched Glendora.
✓ Donna Chandler died Sunday at Desert Hospital in Palm Springs, after she was thrown from a car that had run into a washed-out section of road.
✓ Inez Evans, of El Cerrito, believed to have been swept from her blue Honda station wagon on her way to work last Thursday, is still missing.
✓ Riverside Police Officer David T. Barret's arm was nearly severed after a police helicopter crashed during a Santa Ana River rescue mission. He was in satisfactory condition at Loma Linda University Medical Center.



Staff photo by A.J. Kmiecik

Torrent of water flows down Temescal Wash crossing Old Magnolia Avenue near Corona, one of the many results of the week's heavy rains. Cars in the stream are old vehicles intentionally placed there from wrecking yard at upper left in an attempt to keep water from getting into nearby property.

Wastes hauled from acid pits to protect work site

Large tanker trucks began hauling toxic wastes from the Stringfellow acid pits in Glen Avon this morning as rising water levels began threatening construction work at the site.
James Anderson, executive officer with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, said 11,000 gallons of waste will be pumped out of the acid pits during the next 15 days. He said they were seeking protect areas excavated during recent work to close the acid pits permanently.
If it continues to rain, Anderson said, even more wastes will be pumped out and hauled away to another disposal site in West Covina to keep the pits from overflowing.
Anderson said another five inches of rain would fill the acid

pits to the top. Continued rain this week will determine if more pumping from the pits is needed.
For 17 years the acid pits served as a disposal site for toxic materials, receiving more than 32 million gallons in wastes by the time it was closed in 1972.
The acid pits have filled with rainwater during 1969 and in 1978, and millions of gallons of water contaminated by toxic wastes were spilled into a flood control channel that flows through Glen Avon and Pedley to the Santa Ana River.
Anderson said over the past several weeks, nearly 15 inches of rain have fallen at the old disposal site in Pyrite Canyon, and many of the pits are already full, Anderson said.
Some sandbagging has been done, Anderson said, to make

sure any pit-to-pit water flows inside the toxic waste site will not erode earthen berms, Anderson said.
By this morning, all but about 100 of the airport's 465 planes had either been taxied from the airfield, flown to safety or hauled away by trucks.
Floodwater backing up behind Prado Dam had put about half the runway under water. Despite the shortened runway, nu-

merous pilots were flying out late yesterday. Others who couldn't fly their planes out were hauling them out any way they could. Some used trailers; others used tractors. A few pushed their crafts.
Between 30 and 40 craft, escorted by the police department, taxied from the airport in groups of 10 to safer parking locations in industrial parking lots on Smith Street.
Airport Manager Joe Greer toured the airport in a police car yesterday, using a loudspeaker to inform people that an evacuation was under way.

The state health department has taken tests to determine how much contaminated material was deposited downstream during the spills, and work is underway to permanently close the site and cover it with an impervious clay cap.
"The Corps of Engineers has advised us our entire airport will be under water by Wednesday noon if rain conditions continue," Greer announced. "There will be four feet of water at the east end of the runway."
"The Police Department has arranged for off-airport parking on several factories along Smith Avenue. Line up in the transient parking area and we will convoy you out with police units."
"U-Haul has offered free use of their trucks if there are articles you want to move out of the airport."
Dirt-surfaced, tie-down

spaces on the south side of the airport were under water, and the planes sank into the mud. Several were being pulled out by ropes held by men or attached to trucks.
The road into the airport was also under water, and the paving had begun to erode.
Aer-o-West Aviation was under water yesterday, as was about half the runway and a taxiway.
Greer said airport operators were notified of the crisis, and they in turn were calling people to whom they rent hangar or tie-
(See WATER, Page B-2)

Flood threat forces Corona Airport evacuation

Water now fell on ground already saturated, and more rain was due. Six storms blew in from the Pacific during February.



Lake Elsinore state park workers place caps on water spigots in a picnic area to be able to find them when lake water recedes.
 Staff Photo by Pat O'Brien

Elsinore starts limited evacuation

By PAT O'BRIEN
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
LAKE ELSINORE — The City Council last night, seeing a danger to many homes from the flooding lake, ordered a voluntary evacuation of a minimum of 25 homes in the low-lying areas. Councilman Howie Torn said the council advised anyone living below the 1,256-foot level of the lake to evacuate last night. He said, "We see many homes in danger at the 1,256 level, which we anticipate by early (this) morning. At this point, that's 25 or more homes." He said the council also was seeking assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers to relieve the plugged lake overflow channel.

The rains continued yesterday, although not as heavily as over the weekend, and the lake continued to rise and spread all day. Meanwhile, water covering septic tanks and sewer pump stations has caused county health officials to close the lake to the public. Some people already have

left their homes around the perimeter of the lake and along a swollen flood channel, and more evacuations are likely as the lake nears its overflow mark of 1,261 feet above sea level.

The American Red Cross has set up an evacuation headquarters at Elsinore Elementary School on Sumner and Lindsey streets. Food and sleeping bags are available. A hotline telephone number at the evacuation center is 674-2164.

Lake Elsinore disaster preparedness officer Delores McDaniels said trucks are available to move people to the center.

The lake is now at its highest level since the early 1940s. If it overflows into the single channel running through downtown Lake Elsinore to the Temescal Wash, as many people fear, it would be the first time it has done so since 1916.

The elevation was 1,254.48 feet above sea level at 3 p.m. yesterday and was continuing to rise as 1.5 billion gallons of water per day flowed down the San Jacinto (See LAKE, Page B-3)



James C. Bowers from the U.S. Geological Survey office in Laguna Nigel prepares to ride over the raging San Jacinto River near the Cranston Ranger Station to measure the depth, width and speed of the river. Information is shared by U.S.G.S. and Riverside County Flood Control District. Findings were not available yesterday.
 Staff Photo by Joyce Smith

Rains, washouts cause major problems in school transportation

By GAIL WESSON
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
HEMET — When it rains Rande Downer, the transportation supervisor for the Hemet schools, knows he is in for the basic 17-hour day.

He is not the only one who puts in longer hours in inclement weather, of course.

When rains make road conditions hazardous, decisions and actions involve bus drivers in outlying areas, volunteer radio operators and school district administrators.

Transportation and administration officials together decide whether children will be bused to school or have the day off.

More children in the Hemet Unified School District are affected by inclement weather decisions than in the much smaller and more compact San Jacinto Unified School District.

The problem for the San Jacinto district is access across the San Jacinto River to between 50 and 60 children who live east of the river, mostly on the Soboba Indian Reservation.

The Hemet district decisions may affect students from the Idyllwild, Anza and Sage areas. In the case of the present series of rainstorms the busing problem has affected about 300 children in the Sage area who are brought to the Intermediate School, Hemet Junior High and Hemet High School.

Those children did not go to school yesterday and when they will return to school depends on

when roads are reopened and determined safe for bus travel. A major washout at Sage and structural damage to the Shamrock Bridge across Temecula Creek may necessitate rerouting of buses indefinitely.

In San Jacinto, the buses usually cross Main Street to pick up children, but that crossing has been closed since the rains began last week. The only other paved road to the reservation is Soboba Road, which occasionally is closed by mud slides.

Harold Peebles, the bus supervisor in San Jacinto, checks the roads about 5:30 a.m., then determines whether the buses will run. Yesterday the road was open in the morning, but because of uncertain weather conditions the children were not picked up for school.

Both districts call Hemet radio station KHSJ, at 1320 on the AM radio dial, with bus information so students and parents can listen for the latest information.

In Hemet, where the distances are farther and the decisions more involved, parents also can call the district phone number from about 5 a.m. on to get a tape-recorded message about bus service.

In outlying areas, the bus drivers often know their passengers' parents and may phone them to let them know the status of the bus service.

Usually, a single rainy day doesn't present a problem for the district transportation system,

but the present rains present a different story.

The task of determining in the early morning hours whether the rain has created problems severe enough to cancel bus runs is not an easy one.

Downer of Hemet works with

a page-long list of phone numbers of district employees and agencies which can contribute answers to the riddle of how bad the road conditions are.

At the first indication of inclement weather, he calls the National Weather Service in Los An-

geles, which gives weather conditions and predictions. A night call may be sufficient to determine the next morning's conditions, but sometimes, like recent-

ly, there are checks to be made in the morning, beginning around 4 a.m.

One of the commonly used (See BUSING, Page B-3)

The water in Lake Elsinore was rising. The San Jacinto River, which carries run-off from the San Jacinto Mountains as well as rain water, and which flows into the lake, was a torrent.

Pilot crashes in pond as nearly 100 planes leave flooded airport

By IRIS HAYWARD
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
 CORONA — Nearly 100 airplanes had been pulled out of flood-plagued Corona Municipal Airport by late yesterday, and one pilot had crashed into a sewage percolation pond, as police and city officials continued dealing with storm-related problems.

As rain continued to fall, sometimes in torrents, rescue operations had to be suspended at the airport for several hours during the morning.

Police traffic officer Sam Spiegel, who was in charge of the airport evacuation operation, said a high wind came up early yesterday, making it impossible to take planes out for several hours for fear they would tip over.

Several pilots continued trying to fly out on a runway that was half covered with water and the last to make the attempt late in the afternoon, Mike Sipl of Villa Park, crashed.

Police said Sipl made the take-off all right, but when he circled back to head east towards Riverside Airport his plane lost power and he tried to land back on the runway.

Police said his plane went nose-first into a sewage percolation pond located east of the airport. The four-seat Cessna 182 was still in the pond late yesterday, but Sipl emerged uninjured.

Police said officers who were stationed at the airport, including Spiegel, went to the pilot's rescue, and several people waded into the sewer pond to help him out of the plane.

Elsewhere in Corona, during the height of the storm, streets were covered with sheets of water, intersections were flooded, and several low-lying streets were impassable.

Meanwhile, about 1,500 Corona customers of Southern California Edison lost electrical power yesterday morning when a transformer failed at Olive Street near Taylor Avenue.

The outage, which lasted

from 8:40 to 9:15 a.m., affected an area from Tenth Street south to Ontario Avenue and from Lincoln Avenue east to Garretson Avenue, said Terry Coe, district operations manager for SCE.

In another incident, two wires that blew together in the wind caused a one-hour outage to about 40 customers near Garretson and Gilbert Avenues, he added. The power there went off about 1 p.m.

In Norco, Hamner Avenue was covered with a foot of water at noon between First and Second streets, as the South Norco Channel overflowed its banks.

Norco officials said debris had apparently been caught in the channel under the road so the water spilled out over the roadway. By the time crews for the state Department of Transportation arrived in early afternoon, the water had already subsided.

At the east end of Corona, where the Temescal Wash continued to overflow its banks and carry large volumes of water through the city to Prado Basin, workmen for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hauled in boulders to shore up the edges of the wash and keep water from spilling into several industrial plants.

Supervisor Walt Abraham said he had a call from corps officials early in the morning, seeking permission from the county to do some blasting north of East Sixth Street near the Corona city limits.

Abraham said the corps had been taking rock from a quarry in the area, ran out of material, and wanted permission to blast more rock loose from a pit in the same vicinity.

Two houses on the edge of embankments which are eroding due to the rains were still perched precariously in place yesterday. Although erosion continues to take place, the houses hadn't begun to slide over.

The largest of the two is a split-level house belonging to William Bommer of River Drive in Norco. The Bommers evacuated



Staff photo by Greg Crowder

Mike Sipl of Villa Park was unhurt when his plane landed in sewage pond in attempt to leave flooded Corona airport.

the house over the weekend when a bluff overlooking the Santa Ana River crumbled away to within several feet of their home.

In Corona, a small house owned by Lily Worsham of Quarry Street, which was also evacuated over the weekend, remains within inches of an embankment overlooking Temescal Wash which has eroded about 30 feet.

Jayne Westall of Indiana Auto Wrecking, which has the Temescal Wash running down one side, said the work done by the corps in her area appears to be containing the flood waters coming into the city from Temescal Canyon.

She said the water level yesterday was lower than that on Monday, but it takes four to six

hours for each new downpour to be felt in increased flow along the wash.

Benny Benson, general manager of Six-Pac Industry on East Sixth said his firm shut down production Monday morning because of rising water problems, and only 10 out of 35 employees were at work yesterday.

He said the firm was flooded two years ago, so when the wash began to rise last week, all materials and camper units were moved to higher ground.

Airport Manager Joe Greer said corps officials are still predicting that the entire airport could be covered with water by today if the storms continue.

Electrical failure limits hours at Norco High

By HOLLY KURTZ
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

NORCO — Norco High School will be on a minimum-day schedule today as officials from the school district and Southern California Edison try to restore electrical power to all the buildings of the school.

The lights went out Saturday night when the electrical panel that provides power to the school exploded after a short circuit, apparently triggered by lightning or water from rain. No one was injured in the explosion and fire, which occurred during a Valentine's Day dance.

School district officials obtained a temporary electrical panel from a Los Angeles firm Monday night and worked with Southern California Edison to set

it up so classrooms would have lights and heat, said Associate Superintendent Paul Buckley. As of last night two buildings had light, he said.

The school made it through a minimum day yesterday, despite parent complaints about holding classes without lights or heat. Both students and staff handled the day well, though it is "not the best situation," said Superintendent Augie Ramirez.

A minimum day lasts from 8:20 to 11:15 a.m. School officials spent Monday visiting each classroom to see if it allowed in enough daylight to hold class. Classes in rooms that were too dark were moved to the gymnasium, cafeteria, theater and other rooms, Ramirez said. School districts in the state must complete

a certain number of days of instruction each year, so officials did not want to close the school.

Teachers opened doors to their rooms to let in more light yesterday, but that method will not work if rain and wind return, Buckley said.

Officials considered student health and safety before deciding to keep school open, Ramirez added.

Buckley estimated the cost of repairs at \$75,000 to \$100,000, including equipment and labor. Repairs to the panel will cost at least \$40,000, he said. To pay for the repairs, the district may apply for federal funds made available since Riverside County was declared a disaster area, Buckley added. But those funds could take a year to arrive, so the dis-

trict may have to dip into its contingency fund, he said.

School officials hope to complete repairs by spring vacation in April, Ramirez said.

The original electrical panel, about 8 feet long and 8 feet high, exploded shortly before 11 p.m. Saturday, Norco fire Capt. Lloyd Almand said. The 100 students attending the dance in the gymnasium were evacuated, he said.

The panel, surrounded by a brick enclosure, stands about 40 feet from the gymnasium. Firefighters controlled the blaze in about 10 minutes, and no school buildings were damaged, he added.

From six to eight explosions occurred in the panel, and flames were shooting above the brick enclosure, Almand said.

Rains interrupt repairs on bridge over wash Sports groups seek end to drainage problems at park

CORONA — Even before Temescal Wash began raging out of control during the latest series of rainstorms, the state Department of Transportation had begun repair work beneath a Riverside Freeway bridge which crosses the wash in east Corona.

The work has been suspended because of the rains. The area where workmen labored last week in bright sunshine is now completely under a roaring river of water.

Joella Johnson, a spokeswoman for the department's San

Bernardino office, said the \$60,000 repair job was scheduled for completion in mid-March, before the rainstorms halted the work.

She said the bridge supports had sustained some damage during storms in previous years, and the department was in the process of repairing the damage and reinforcing two rows of cement supports below the bridge.

She said this kind of work is needed once in a while on freeway bridge supports, but not too often.

The problem is that the Temescal Wash lies beneath the bridge, and most of the year it is dry, or has only a narrow trickle of water flowing along it.

During heavy storms, however, the wash turns into a river, and in rainstorms during recent years, some footings beneath the bridge had begun to erode.

Joe Conrad of Hillside Repair in Fullerton, who is handling the repair work for the department, said nine pilings beneath the bridge needed repair work because of water flow beneath the bridge.

He said steel beams inside the cement footings had begun to erode, weakening the support structure. He said the supports went three feet into the ground, but the repair work was setting new footings four feet deeper than that.

Conrad said it was an unusual problem, which was spotted by a department inspector who checks bridge supports.

It won't be possible to tell until the flood waters recede whether further damage has been caused during the latest storms.

CORONA — Representatives of several youth sports leagues are expected to attend tonight's City Council meeting to ask for a solution to problems at Butterfield Park.

The park, which has been plagued by rising underground water for months, even during the dry weather, has been under water during the recent rainstorms.

The Park-Recreation Commission at a recent meeting voted to ask the council seek long-range solutions to park drainage problems.

The action was taken at the urging of representatives of the American Little League, Babe Ruth League, American Youth Soccer Organization and Youth Tackle Football.

Park-Recreation Director Ken Redlin said the commission sees the need for two other projects at the park, in addition

to work to solve the problems caused by rains.

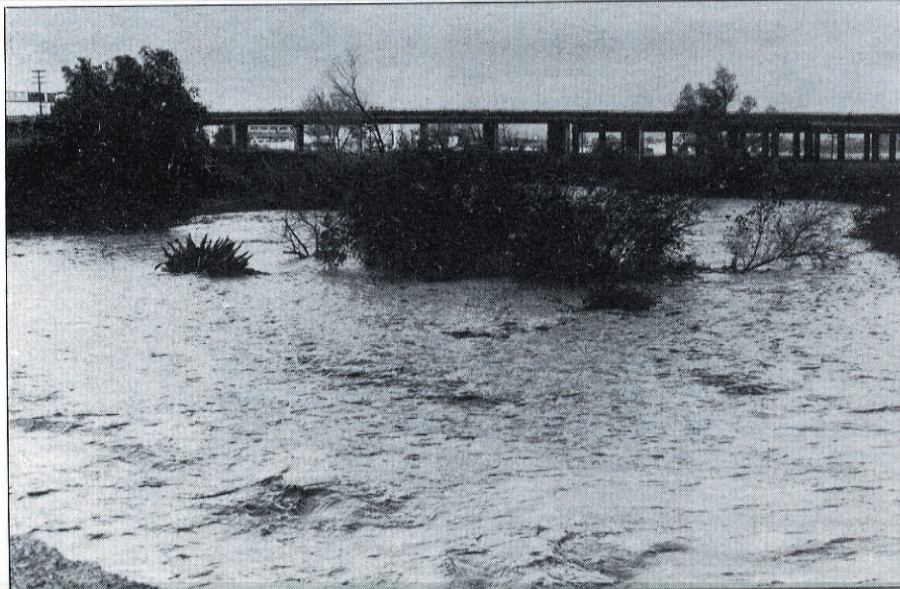
One is to open up surface drain systems and keep them open so underground water which rises to the surface (part of it flowing beneath the airport entry road from the sewage percolation ponds) can drain.

The other request is for a long-range plan to resolve all water problems in the park area.

The park, which is in Prado Flood Control Basin, is subject to flooding whenever it rains. The land is leased by the city from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Even during dry weather, land in the basin is so saturated with water, that underground water level is close to the surface.

Redlin said he doesn't know when the park, which was closed two weeks ago, will be ready for public use.



Staff photo by Iris Hayward

Water in swollen Temescal Wash rushes toward Riverside Freeway bridge in background.

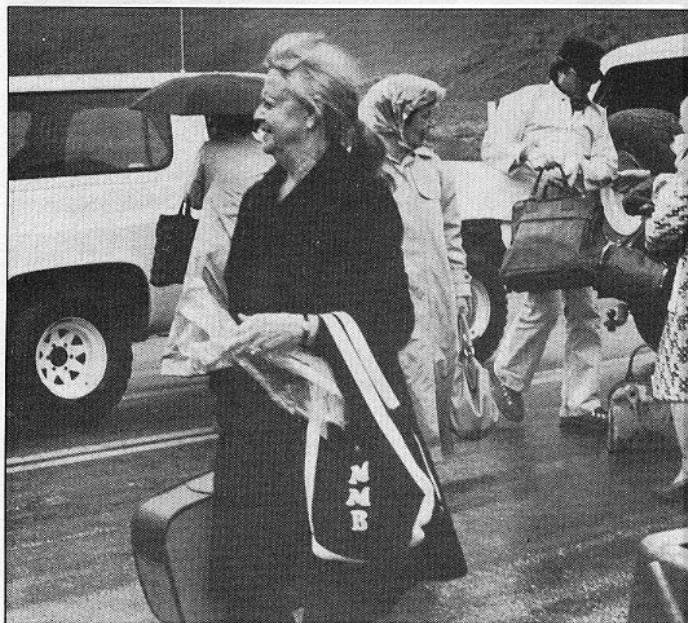
Every part of western Riverside County had its own flood-related problems to contend with.



Palm Springs Mounted Police members cross the Bogert Trail bridge toward the entrance to Andreas Hills development to warn residents there of their last chance for evacuation for several days.

Staff Photo by Herb Pasik

44 evacuated from exclusive Palm Springs hillside homes



Staff Photo by Herb Pasik

Evacuees from Andreas Hills leave the four-wheel-drive vehicles they were brought out in.

By HERB PASIK
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
PALM SPRINGS — Forty-four residents of the exclusive Andreas Hills development were evacuated across the rampaging Palm Canyon Wash here yesterday in a dramatic rescue by police and mounted police volunteers.

Three of the evacuees, all of whom were trucked across the buckling Bogert Trail bridge by four-wheel-drive vehicles at the height of a new rainstorm, walked back across the flooded bridge to rejoin 17 other residents who elected to stay in their homes.

"I guess they wanted to be with their friends and changed their minds," a police spokesman said.

The decision by police to evacuate those who wanted to leave the virtually isolated hillside development of expensive homes was made at about 1 p.m., with initial plans calling for helicopters to airlift the stranded residents out of the area.

Police Lt. Mike McCrary, a ranking member of the Palm Springs Mounted Police, a volunteer organization called in for search-and-rescue operations, said the residents were informed it would be their last opportunity to leave for at least several days because the heavily damaged bridge was giving way and electrical service was expected to be disrupted.

When difficulty was encountered in obtaining the services of two helicopters deployed on other emergencies in Yucca Valley and Cabazon, four-wheel-drive vehicles were used to ferry the evacuees across the bridge over a lane marked by lifeline ropes.

Earlier, more than half a dozen mounted police volunteers on horseback rode over the bridge, covered by as much as a foot of water in some places, and sounded the evacuation alert.

More than 20 mounted police and regular police officers took part in the evacuation during intermittent rain showers that raised the level of the already swollen wash.

Bogert Trail is the only way in and out of Andreas Hills and between 150 and 200 residents evacuated early Sunday when it was thought the bridge would be washed out. Many of them were allowed to return.

Huge sections of pavement have been torn from the street bridge by the raging wash during the series of storms that have flooded natural drainage channels in this area for the past week.

The residents evacuated yesterday said they had plenty of food on hand, but decided to leave when told that power to their homes probably would be knocked out by the storm and that the bridge was close to being washed out.

"It was a little scary coming over the bridge," said Todd Frank as he prepared to board a

bus with his wife, Irene, and their Siamese cat, Baby.

"We left for our safety," he said. "From the looks of the road, it may go real soon." Frank told the bus driver he wanted to be dropped off at the Canyon Hotel about a mile south of Andreas Hills. "I didn't make a reservation and I hope we can get in."

Another evacuee, Harry Bowrytz, said he left Andreas Hills because of the possible washout of the bridge.

"We would be stranded there," he said, "and they told us about a problem with the water supply."

According to police, the supply was cut off at Andreas Hills yesterday because of concern that it might become polluted by the flood waters. The development has its own water tank which was filled before the cutoff and contained enough water for at least several days.

Mary Nicholson said she decided not to stay in her home because "we were frightened the electricity would be cut off." She said the personnel who evacuated her and the others were "fantastic."

"They rode up to our houses, knocked on the doors and said we (See RESCUE, Page B-2)

Pioneertown residents can show their grit

By HELEN JOHNSON
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

YUCCA VALLEY — The county roads into Pioneertown have been washed out since Saturday, but the residents say they're hanging tough.

Pioneertown Road leading north from Yucca Valley and Highway 62 to Pioneertown is closed indefinitely on both sides of the community, the California Highway Patrol said.

It is the main road to Pioneertown, which has been the location of many western films, hence the town's name. Pipes Canyon Road, the paved county road leading to the west, also is blocked. The very rugged, unpaved Skyline Road leading east is privately owned.

Pioneertown has few businesses. The post office has 450 boxes to serve the area, but mail has not come through from Yucca Valley since the road collapsed last Saturday.

"Everyone here stocks up on food and water for these emergencies," local resident Frances Martin said by telephone yesterday. She keeps a herd of 20 goats and is running out of feed. But during the storm it was business as usual, with the task of delivering four baby goats.

She also wrote two short stories, turning the isolation period to an advantage. She said she

knows of no real emergencies, but if anyone is sick she said she has goat's milk to give them.

The two paved streets running through the town are "raging rivers," said Frances Aleba of the Cantina Tavern. She said the town's 17-member volunteer fire department is standing by for emergencies.

All the volunteers are trained in first aid, she said. They are keeping in touch with townspeople by use of their page boxes, which are standard equipment for firefighters there, she said.

"We are having a good time," she added. The townspeople were invited to the Cantina for a potluck of chili and beans last evening.

The road to Pioneertown has been closed at least a half-dozen times since 1959, said Ron Young, a long-time resident. "We always have waited it out and tried to stay prepared," he added.

The state Forestry Department said it will try to get emergency equipment through the blocked area if the conditions worsen.

State Highway 62 through the Morongo Basin was just barely open late yesterday, according to the CHP, but a badly flooded area exists between Yucca Valley and Morongo Valley and another between Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree.



Sinking feeling

Among the many victims of the flooding this week in the City of Lake Elsinore were these greenhouses used by Agron Inc. on Lakeshore Drive, a hydroponics firm.

Staff photos by Dave Bauman



Water eroded the ground at Grand and Adelpa in the City of Lake Elsinore.



Debris floats ashore at Lake Elsinore.

Five families isolated near Elsinore get aid via helicopter

By BILL MCKENNA
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

LAKE ELSINORE — Members of five isolated families cheered yesterday as a rescue helicopter made a soft landing on a level patch of rain-soaked earth.

It was their first physical contact with the outside world in 11 days.

Food was running low, not only for the 20 people involved, but for their 11 horses and half-dozen dogs.

The families live in remote Bull Canyon along El Toro Road.

The group included Henrietta Johnson, 20, who is five months pregnant with her second child. Her husband, Roy, said his wife was not greatly concerned about being temporarily isolated.

Before the helicopter arrived, the families chose Pat Peterson to represent them on a shopping spree.

Johnson was sent along, too, so he could attend classes at Mt. San Jacinto College before he fell further behind in his studies. Johnson didn't know that the school had been closed by the flooding San Jacinto River.

California Department of Forestry Fire Capt. Paul Kopriva escorted Peterson to the aircraft. Peterson tried to keep her neatly styled hair in place as she walked through the down-draft from the twirling rotor blades.

"It was my first helicopter ride," she said later at Perris Valley Airport, the marshaling center for a series of helicopter

flights into the west-central sector of Riverside County.

The operation was supervised by the California Department of Forestry and Riverside County Fire Department.

The helicopter is one of sev-

eral being leased to provide communication and rescue service to isolated families in Riverside.

Peterson had been sent out \$200 to buy groceries. She returned to a hero's welcome from her neighbors. She stretched the money

into 20 sacks of groceries, 11 bales of hay, and some dog and cat food.

Kopriva and Pilot David Patrick of Long Beach airlifted the foodstuffs and hay in a sling secured to the bottom of the heli-

copter. They returned 15 minutes later to return Peterson and Johnson to their homes.

Peterson said she was beginning to wonder if the sun would shine again. "We had the rain right up to the belly of our

horses," Peterson, who lives alone, said.

She said the hilltop homes in Bull Canyon were not in trouble from the rains, but the animals, kept in corrals in low areas, were endangered by flooding.

"We were concerned for our lives," Johnson said. "Our homes are high and dry, but we were totally isolated when all access roads into the area were washed out."

Peterson said the residents of Bull Canyon are a closely knit group who shared food and animal feed. No one panicked, she said. County.

Earlier in the day, three people were flown out of Lewis Valley, where they had been stranded by the flood for several days. They were Mike Porter, 19, his 18-year-old pregnant wife, Lori, and her 17-year-old brother, Tom Boyles.

Their plight was called to the attention of the state Department of Forestry by Stan Allen of Rancho California. The three work for Allen on his Jojoba nut ranch about 22 miles southeast of Temecula.

Allen said yesterday that all the roads leading into the area were washed out and there are about 200 families living in isolation in the area that surrounds Sage and Anza.

The three were flown into Temecula where they stay until the roads in the Lewis Valley area can be repaired.



Staff Photo by Bill McKenna

Hay and food were flown in by helicopter yesterday to families isolated in Bull Canyon, near Elsinore, by the storm.



Selection of an engineering consultant to design a bridge over the Whitewater River at Ramon Road in Palm Springs was being considered yesterday. The major east-west road to the eastern Palm Springs city limit frequently is blocked to traffic by flooding.

Staff Photo by Herb Pasik

Cost of all-weather Ramon Road bridge over Whitewater River could be up to \$6 million

By HERB PASIK
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

PALM SPRINGS — Construction of an all-weather bridge over the flood-prone Whitewater River at Ramon Road could cost as much as \$6 million, according to a city official.

That would be considerably more than previous estimates of \$3.4 million by county officials and \$4 million by Palm Springs city officials for the proposed joint city-county project.

For the past week, Ramon has been impassable at the normally dry wash crossing because of heavy flooding along the Whitewater from the current series of storms. The roadblock, which occurs invariably during heavy rains, has disrupted the east-west route normally taken by thousands of desert area commuters and others to enter and leave Palm Springs at the easterly city limit.

Last summer, the Palm Springs City Council made an emergency appropriation of \$2 million in the city budget to cover the city's estimated 50 percent share of the bridge cost. Plans call for the county government to pay for the other 50 percent because the project would be partly in the city and partly in the county.

Bob Whitehair, assistant to the city's community development director, said yesterday that one engineering consultant who worked on another municipal project here had estimated that a four-lane street bridge

across the Whitewater at Ramon "could go as high as \$6 million."

He said the county had "reserved" \$1.7 million in surplus state Transportation Act money as "their share of what they consider to be a \$3.4 million project."

"We feel that's a little low

and have estimated the total cost at \$4 million and have actually budgeted \$2 million as our share."

If the cost of a four-lane street bridge goes as high as the recent \$6 million estimate by the engineering consultant, Whitehair said, one alternative would be to build a two-lane bridge.

That would significantly cut the cost of the bridge, but not in half as some might assume, he said.

Whitehair estimated that it would be "at least two years" before the project is completed.

Last December, county officials sent out requests to engineering consultants for proposals to design the bridge.

Whitehair said nine proposals were received and were narrowed down to two firms, officials of which were being interviewed by city and county officials in Riverside yesterday.

He said the two firms were Alderman, Swift and Lewis, which offered to design the bridge for \$4,580, and Johnson and Nielson Associates of Riverside, which submitted a figure of \$105,000 with its proposal.

Whitehair said a contract will be negotiated with the firm selected by county and city officials. He said the contract then will be submitted to the county Board of Supervisors for its approval.

When the City Council approved the \$2 million emergency appropriation for the bridge project last summer, council members indicated that the money set aside under the capital improvement program for the next five years probably would be earmarked for other purposes if the county falls to come up with its 50 percent share.

Alfred McCandless, Fourth District county supervisor and chairman of the board, said last spring that at least two and possibly three years would be required for Riverside County to come up with its share of the bridge cost.

Palm Springs estimates damage at \$2 million

PALM SPRINGS — The City of Palm Springs sees an estimated \$2 million in damage to public property so far from the rainstorms that have hit the area in the past week.

Hardest hit was the Bogert Trail access bridge, which has suffered serious structural damage and at present is open only to foot traffic and emergency vehicles, city officials said.

The Army Corps of Engineers has indicated that the bridge probably will have to be replaced at a cost of more than \$1 million, according to Bob Ernst, street maintenance superintendent.

Added to that will be the cost to repair heavily damaged streets such as Sunrise Way, Farrell Drive and El Cielo Drive at the Tahquitz Creek Wash.

A broken sewer line at the Bogert Trail bridge to the Andreas Hills development led city officials to contact the county Health

Department for a determination of whether a health problem exists.

Raw sewage is being dumped into Palm Canyon Wash from the broken line.

If a health problem is determined to exist, the remaining residents of Andreas Hills would have to be evacuated, as 44 of them were on Tuesday because of the wash flooding over the bridge.

Ernst said the Corps of Engineers' efforts to build a levee in the middle of Palm Canyon Wash to divert water flow from the north bank in the Araby Tract area were mostly wiped out early yesterday.

He said around 3:30 a.m. a "terrifying" surge of water came down the wash and knocked down much of what the engineers had constructed.

Hispanic group complains of Indio police harassment

By MIKE KATAOKA
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

INDIO — A group claiming to represent local Hispanics accused the Indio Police Department last night of harassment as it presented the City Council with specific demands.

About 100 mostly Hispanic protesters packed the Council Chambers and several waived handpainted placards to get their message across.

Addressing the council were four members of an Hispanic organization called Congreso para Pueblos Unidos, which was founded three years ago and established a local chapter with 85 members last December.

Among the charges leveled by the speakers was that a local businessman's prosecution for allegedly selling obscene material was in retaliation for the anti-police statements he made at a council meeting last April.

The businessman, Jose Ramos, was the target of a three-month police investigation which led to his arrest Dec. 21.

The District Attorney's office last week filed a misdemeanor complaint against Ramos, who owns the Alamo Discount Store on Fargo Street, which charges him with five counts of selling obscene films and magazines. Also charged was Israel Reyes, an employee.

At the April meeting, Ramos complained that Indio police officers were overstepping their authority in attempting to round up suspected illegal aliens.

Ramos cited specific instances of what he considered police harassment of local residents.

Last night, one of the speakers asserted that Ramos was being harassed in the criminal case pending against him.

Father Jose Pawlicki praised Ramos for "defending human rights" and suggested that the obscenity charge has no merit.

Pawlicki, an Anglo who supports Hispanic causes, claimed that the pornographic material Ramos allegedly was selling was hidden in a file cabinet and sold by a store employee.

Ramos, according to Pawlicki, was unaware that the material was in his store.

"There are plenty of stores in town where I have seen pornography on the shelves sold openly," Pawlicki said.

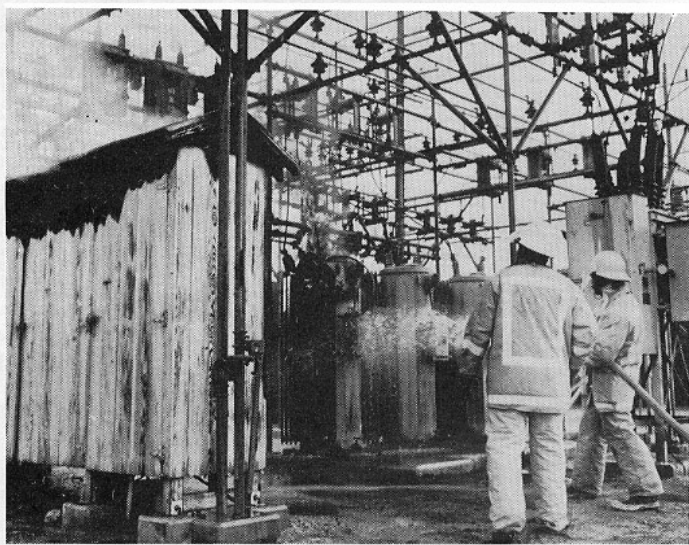
He asserted that following Ramos' public statements, there was "word on the streets" that the police department was going to "get" Ramos.

The points brought out by Ramos 10 months ago were restated by Pawlicki and the others last night and specific instances were presented to the City Council in writing.

"The Indio Police Department has taken it upon itself to harass and humiliate Hispanic citizens in this city," said Gil Esquivel, an Indio resident and member of the group.

He accused the police of "over patrolling" places Hispanics frequent for entertainment,

(See POLICE, Page B-3)



Staff Photo by Mike Kataoka

Why the power was out

Transformers ignited around 3 p.m. yesterday at the Imperial Irrigation District's electrical supply station on Monroe Street and Avenue

44 in Indio. The fire knocked out power in the immediate area. District crews brought back the service within an hour.

On the morning of Feb. 21, talk of another bridge over the Whitewater River was judged the main news of the day in the Coachella Valley.

450 evacuated as San Jacinto River levee breaks

By ANDY MELDRUM
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

A San Jacinto River levee, weakened by powerful runoff waters, broke yesterday forcing at least 450 people to evacuate nearby low-lying areas.

The collapse of the 150-foot concrete levee and steadily rising waters at Lake Elsinore emerged as the two most critical trouble spots as Riverside County en-

tered its second week of almost non-stop rainstorms.

Elsewhere in the county, a helicopter transported a pregnant woman stranded near Temecula and dropped food to several families isolated in the Ramona area. Little rain fell in desert areas yesterday, but runoff water continued to fill washes and keep many main roads closed. With an estimated \$37 million damage from the storms, the

county has been included in a six-county request for federal disaster assistance.

Families along the storm-swollen San Jacinto River were evacuated yesterday after U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concluded that the levee was being damaged as runoff from the Hemet-San Jacinto Valley coursed through the normally dry riverbed. Five bulldozers tried to shore up the concrete levee,

located where the river crosses Highway 79 north of San Jacinto. Damage was initially minimal, however, because of dirt backed up near the weakened levee.

Yesterday's collapse was the third levee break along the river in the past five days; two earthen levees failed earlier this week.

Meanwhile, at Lake Elsinore, a dispute between city officials and federal officials erupted yesterday after the Army Corps of Engineers rejected an urgent City Council plea to deepen a flood-control channel that cuts through the city. City officials said the action is necessary to channel runoff from the rising lake into the Temescal Wash.

A spokesman for the Army corps, which has been fighting floods in various parts of the county, said that agency refused to deepen the Elsinore Spillway Channel "because we don't know the structure well enough to fool with it."

An angry Ira Pace, Lake Elsinore's city manager, said yesterday that he didn't "buy that one damn bit."

He said the city's business district and some residential areas might soon be under water if the Army engineers did not act.

City crews had been working for two days to clear up the channel but had made little progress.

Last night, the corps reconsidered the problem but a spokesman said it would not begin work to reopen the channel until receiving a request from the governor.

"We're going to send a survey team to look at what has to be done," said Maury Peerenboom, spokesman for the corps. "The city of Lake Elsinore will have to contact state Office of Emergency Services and the governor will have to request us (the Army corps) before any actual physical work will proceed there," said Peerenboom, who added that the survey alone will probably last until tomorrow. "We feel we have some time before serious flooding will actually begin."

Reacting to Army corps' decision, Lake Elsinore City Councilman Howie Torn last night said, "Well the first thing we're going to do is get in touch with Sacramento as soon as we think any state bureaucrats will be in their offices."

Torn was hopeful the governor would approve calling in the Army corps so work could start this weekend. "If (the Army corps' work) has to start by then or we'll have some serious flooding, especially if there's any heavy rain," he said.

The lake had risen to the 1,255.10-foot elevation level yesterday evening with a billion gallons of water per day coming over the Railroad Canyon dam.

After the council advised evacuations to the 1,256-foot level Tuesday night, residents along the low-lying Lakeshore Drive area were seen packing up cars and trucks to leave the threatened area. Some homes there already have totally flooded ground floors.

A few families came into the Red Cross evacuation center Tuesday night but they left to stay with friends.

As the storm entered its second week, light showers were expected this morning and a heavier storm was forecast for late tonight. A flood watch was posted for mountains and canyons throughout Southern California. The weather is expected to (See STORM, Page 2)



Staff photo by Jim Edwards

Heavy equipment works to shore up broken San Jacinto River levee. The mobile homes in the distance at left were evacuated.

A taste of high country raises low spirits at lakeside

By JAMES RICHARDSON
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

LAKE ELSINORE — The lake rose underneath the floorboards but the Coors beer held out — one of the few saving graces to an otherwise abysmal day at the Holiday Park. "Everything's working," said mobile home park owner Al Mueller, sipping on a can of Coors yesterday afternoon. "We got electricity. We got water. We got toilets. We got TV. We got beer. We got 2½ feet before our feet are wet."

Al and his wife Pat had to abandon their mobile home to the rising lake last weekend. They moved into their park's bar, with suitcases and pillows. Their friends and customers sat around the bar yesterday, listening to a police radio scanner and watching television as the water rose around them.

They weren't leaving, flood or no flood. "What the hell else is there to do?" Al put it.

The morning drinking session was filled with worry. They heard reports over the police scanner that a levee on the San

Jacinto River collapsed. That gave everyone a few jitters. But by midafternoon, and a number of beers later, the collapsed levee didn't seem such a big deal after all.

The Muellers lost a good chunk of their property — and their business — to the lake. They had to haul 22 trailers out the lake's path, trailers which represented monthly rents. And the lake was lapping at the sides of three immobile mobile homes, with more in its path.

Definitely a problem. But not something for the Muellers to fall to pieces over. "I'm doing just fine," Pat said, "as long as the bar holds out. I don't want to leave."

The bar, a red rustic building, sat nine feet off the ground near the entrance to the park. Yesterday, there wasn't much left of that nine feet. For all practical purposes, the bar was an island in the lake. "That's what you call a 'wet bar,'" cracked Pat, getting a few groans from her audience. The Red Cross set up three evacuation centers Tuesday

night, but had few takers. The Muellers and their tenants had no plans to sleep on any canvas cots in any school auditorium.

The Muellers had plenty of moral support. One friend, Jean Conrad, eating an enchilada off a paper plate, said, "Tell Mr. Conrad that Mrs. Conrad is alright. He's in Lakewood and I'm down here in the water."

Al kept track of the rising lake by keeping track of landmarks as they submerged. He watched each step on his mobile home as each, one by one, took a dive. And yesterday morning the telephone booth next to the park's snack bar was dry. By afternoon, the floor was awash.

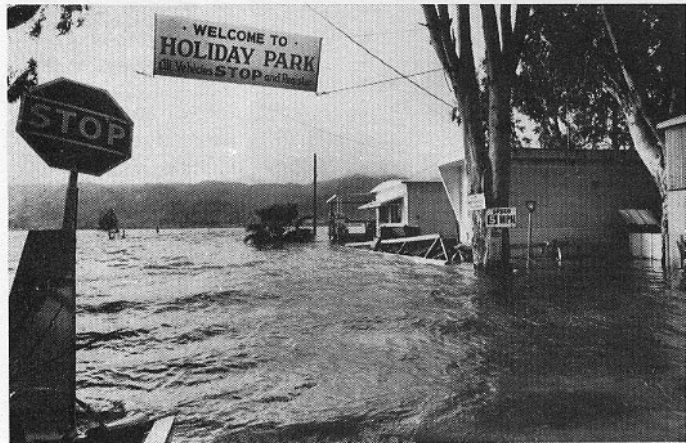
The lake had crept about 50 yards into the park. Telephone poles — about 35 feet high — were barely visible above the water line. The poles were the only markers left showing where the beach was supposed to be.

A sign over the entrance to the park warned drivers to take it slow: "Speed 5 mph." There didn't seem to be any problem enforcing that yesterday. The sign was in the lake.

One of the families forced to abandon their mobile home wasn't about to abandon the park. Betty Thysell took up temporary residence in a small trailer on high ground near the road. Her son, Don, moved into a rental cabin down the road.

Don got their furniture out of the mobile home last weekend. The floor was flooded.

And the Muellers weren't going anywhere either. Said Pat, "The captain is the last to leave the boat." And crack open another Coors.



Staff photo by Dave Bauman

Holiday Park on Lakeshore Drive was flooded yesterday by water from Lake Elsinore.

A series of levee breaks began along the San Jacinto River that was to culminate in disaster for thousands in the City of San Jacinto.

6,300 flee San Jacinto, desert homes

By CARLA LAZZARESCHI
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

Levee breaks in San Jacinto and Palm Springs forced evacuations today of 6,300 residents.

In San Jacinto, 5,000 of the city's 6,000 residents fled their homes after a levee along the San Jacinto River broke at 7 a.m. Shortly after the break, a helicopter, with its siren blaring, flew over the city and a voice gave a Paul Revere-like warning: "The water is coming. The water is coming."

The National Guard was ordered to Palm Springs, where at least 1,300 residents were evacuated. An earthen levee along the swollen Palm Canyon Wash collapsed at 6 a.m. today, sending water into several neighborhoods along the southeastern stretch of Highway 111, the city's main thoroughfare.

As water flowed through San Jacinto streets, four helicopters, one with a physician aboard, flew over the city, rescuing residents from rooftops and streets. Police and sheriff's deputies, aided by volunteers, also collected boats and rubber rafts to rescue residents trapped in their homes.

The residents who made it out of the city were taken to the Hemet Fairgrounds, where officials set up an evacuation center. The estimated 1,000 residents remaining in San Jacinto were expected to be put up in the city's community center, Moose Lodge and churches. At 11 a.m. officials said the floodwaters had not reached their highest level yet.

Between 50 and 100 National Guard troopers were trucked into Palm Springs from Long Beach to guard against looting in the temporarily abandoned neighborhoods. The troopers were also asked by police to check the conditions of several dikes and levees.

In addition, Araby Bridge

More details, pictures of the storm's effects in Riverside County on Pages B-1 through B-5.

along the highway was closed this morning by officials who feared rains and runoff had damaged the structure.

Before today's flooding, city officials had estimated the past week's storms had caused about \$2 million in damage.

Four persons were killed in Riverside County this morning in storm-related traffic deaths, bringing to eight the number of persons who have died in weather-related accidents since the rains began last week. Three of today's fatalities occurred in Riverside.

The latest levee break in San Jacinto — the fourth and most serious since the storms began — cut the city off from Hemet. "We're an island," police Sgt. John Mauch said. Officials estimated that the levee break was between 200 and 400 yards wide.

Elsewhere in the county, officials were nervously watching the water level in Lake Elsinore, where overnight runoff added another 6 inches to the already swollen lake.

Riverside Public Works Director Robert Wales, meanwhile, asked residents to use as little water as possible because rain water was seeping into the sewage system, threatening sewer-line backups.



Staff photo by Fred Bauman

A helicopter descends this morning to rescue people from the roof of a house surrounded by floodwaters in San Jacinto.

Storm at a glance

FATALITIES: 23 storm-related deaths in Southern California, several missing. More than 10,500 evacuated or advised to evacuate.

DAMAGE: 110 homes destroyed, some 1,350 damaged. An estimated \$267 million in total damage in Southern California.

HIGHWAYS: Highway 111 closed in Palm Springs. I-15 closed from Escondido to Riverside County line. I-5 northbound closed between state highways 99 and 166 near Bakersfield. Santa Monica Freeway at McClure Tunnel closed. U.S. 101 closed at Las Posas Road in Camarillo. Most coastal canyon roads closed or restricted.

RAINFALL: Storm series total since Feb. 13 in Los Angeles as of 5 a.m. PST today: 12.72 inches. Season to date: 21.72 inches. Last year at this time: 13.52 inches.

OUTLOOK: Seventh storm in series expected to arrive tonight. Rainy periods expected to continue through Tuesday.

7th storm expected to soak area tonight

Compiled from wire services

Relentless rains today renewed their onslaught on California, where mudslides and flooding have left hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage and crops rotting in the fields.

The deluge in the West also threatened to break a dam in Idaho and about 100 residents of Malad were evacuated. Some schools were closed in Arizona and residents of downtown San Diego were warned to get ready to get out.

Medical supplies and food were airlifted to 200 families marooned since Sunday when the Margarita River swirled around the San Diego County community of De Luz. Downtown San Diego also was threatened with evacuation.

Along the coast, a pounding surf damaged at least a half-dozen

homes in Santa Barbara and threatened others in Malibu.

At least 30 persons have died in California, Utah, Arizona and Mexico since the storms began last week, and loss estimates exceed \$355 million.

Idaho officials evacuated about 20 families living near an 80-foot high dam just north of the farming community of Malad. Water stopped rising in the 30-year-old earthen dam during the night, but state water resources experts said they couldn't guarantee its safety.

Sheriff's officials said about half the town's 1,900 residents would be in the path of floodwaters if the dam broke.

A sixth Pacific weather front in eight days slammed into waterlogged Southern California (See RAIN, Page A-9)

Afghans close stores in anti-Soviet protest

Compiled from wire services

KABUL, Afghanistan — Nearly all shops and stores in Afghanistan's capital city closed today in protest against Soviet military occupation.

Exactly two months after Russian troops crossed the Afghan border in an attempt to put down a Moslem rebellion against Kabul's communist regime, a rebel leader urged shopkeepers to show their "unanimous condemnation" of the intervention by paralyzing the commercial life of this city of 1 million.

All but a handful of shopkeepers obeyed the call despite efforts by the Soviet-sponsored

regime of President Babrak Karmal to force them to stay open.

Today, the eve of the Moslem Sabbath, is normally the capital's busiest shopping day, with shops closed on Friday. In street after street of downtown Kabul, shop fronts were boarded up or closed by iron shutters. Shopkeepers said the rebel strike call was "indefinite" — and that the shutdown would continue Saturday.

Despite a steady drizzle, thousands of civilians stood in the streets to observe the success of the protest.

"We have won a great victory today," one shopkeeper told a

group of Western reporters. "We have shown the Russians what the Afghan people think of them."

At several points, plainclothes police were seen trying to force shopkeepers to remove the boarding from their windows. The shopkeepers generally obeyed, but replaced their shutters as soon as the police had gone.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance met with officials in Paris and London today as he wound up a tour of major European capitals to coordinate a Western response to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Vance failed in Bonn yesterday to get West German support for a boycott of the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow and said after talks in Paris today that differences with the French remain.

Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin, making his first public appearance in more than four months, said today the Soviet Union will fight to save detainees through political means.

"We shall fight for detente by political means, by means of talks," he said, "because the other way could mean madness since it brings the threat of total nuclear war."

Inside Today

● American speed skater Eric Heiden won his fourth Olympic gold medal today. Story in Sports, Page C-1.

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Weather FRIDAY: Rain, partial clearing. Yesterday's high, 64. Overnight low, 52. Details on Page B-2.

By MICHAEL PUTZEL

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. officials refuse to say whether Iran has agreed to release its American hostages in conjunction with actions of the newly formed United Nations commission of inquiry.

However, it appears President Carter has backed away from his earlier insistence the hostages be freed before any international inquiry into the alleged crimes of deposed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran.

That assessment is based on statements by U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim at the United Nations and American officials in Washington as well as

Carter's silence on such a condition last week when he endorsed a U.N. commission.

It could not be learned yesterday what guarantee — if any — the Carter administration has that its cooperation in setting up the commission will result in freedom for the 50 or so Americans who have been held captive in Iran for 110 days.

In fact, Iran's two top leaders and the militants holding the U.S. embassy today repeated demands for the return of the shah and said the U.N. inquiry commission is not directly connected with the release of the American hostages.

Concern over the Iranian situation was cited as the Dow Jones industrial average fell sharply today, losing 18.34 points to close at 868.52. Story on Page C-6.

Tehran Radio quoted President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr as emphasizing Iran "is firmly determined to get the deposed shah back and put him on trial."

The report, on an interview given by Bani-Sadr, said he "also announced that the work of the international commission of investigation into the crimes of the deposed shah has no direct connection with the release of the hostages . . ."

This was broadcast after Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, also demanded the return of the deposed shah but did not mention the hostages.

The militants, who identify themselves as "student followers of the imam's (Khomeini's) policy," today again called for the return of the shah and his money.

One high U.S. official, when asked if the administration's stance has changed, repeated White House press secretary Jody Powell's statement "there are appropriate fora that can be made available for the airing of Iranian grievances but not before the release of the hostages."

Asked how that position could be squared with the present situation, in which a U.N. commission has been established and is scheduled to begin work in Tehran in a few days, the official said: "We'll just have to see, won't we?"

One official repeated Carter's statement at a news conference last week that "an appropriate commission with a carefully defined purpose would be a step toward resolution of this crisis." The official agreed one could infer from the president's use of the words "a step toward" that he had dropped his demand for release of the hostages as a precondition for U.S. support of an investigative commission.

Sewer plant, acid pit problems add to flood woes

Riverside Public Works Director Robert Wales today asked Riverside residents to use as little water as possible because sewer lines may begin backing up as a result of the rain.

Wales said rain water was seeping into the sewage system. Meanwhile, at the Stringfellow acid pits in Glen Avon, runoff had caused waste levels to reach a critical point. Authorities said wastes were being pumped to a Los Angeles treatment plant, and the partially-treated wastes were then being dumped into the Pacific Ocean.

As the rains of 1980 continued in Southern California, four persons were killed in Riverside

County, including three in Riverside, in storm-related traffic accidents early today as the area reeled from the onslaught of the sixth major storm in eight days.

Riverside's sewer plant problem might worsen if rain increases.

"The ground has become saturated, and the rain is starting to infiltrate through old joints and pipes in the system," Wales said.

About 26 million gallons of liquid a day is now being processed at the sewage treatment plant, up six million gallons from average. The plant has a 26 million gallon capacity for domestic sewage water, but because the

rain water does not contain solids, Wales said the plant was not filled to capacity.

"The problems are in the individual (sewer) lines," he said. "The capacity differs by the size of the line. The pipes become full, and there's an outward pressure on the pipes exerted by the liquids." At that point, additional sewage cannot go into the system, Wales said.

Wales said the areas near the Riverside Airport and the southwest section of Riverside were getting the most seepage.

He said that as seepage is added to the sewer system, the pumps at the municipal sewage treatment plant on the Santa Ana

River are having to work harder to process all the liquid. He said there is no current threat that the sewage treatment plant would exceed capacity.

In Glen Avon, contaminated wastewater at the Stringfellow acid pits reached critical levels today, and water quality control officials started emergency hauling of wastes from the site to prevent a spill.

James Anderson, executive officer with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, said 12 tanker truckloads of contaminated wastes will be hauled from the site. Most will be dumped into an industrial sewage line that runs from Chino

to Los Angeles Sanitation Districts treatment facilities.

While contaminated wastes from the pit site will undergo an industrial treatment process, Anderson said wastewater that will be discharged from the treatment facilities into the Pacific Ocean will not meet pollution control standards.

"Many of these heavy metals (found at Stringfellow) will exceed discharge standards," Anderson said. But he added, such discharges are allowed in emergency situations. Anderson said the wastes "are more easily assimilated into the ocean than into the community."

Anderson said the Stringfellow

low acid pits site, where 32 million gallons of highly toxic wastes were dumped during the 18 years it was open for business, has received 18 inches of rain this year. Nine inches of rain have fallen during the recent string of storms.

Anderson said that on Monday waste levels were five feet below the top behind the dam of the main storage pit at the site. The level had risen to within a foot today.

Anderson said he expected the water levels to continue to rise, reaching overflow pipes that spill into a smaller sump pit low. (See FLOOD, Page B-2)

Levee breaks; thousands flee San Jacinto



Floodwaters surge through San Jacinto in this aerial view, which looks toward the south.

Staff photo by Fred Bauman

SAN JACINTO — Thousands of people fled their homes today when a San Jacinto River levee upstream gave way, flooding the city and forcing rooftop rescues via helicopters and boats.

Shortly after the 7 a.m. break, a helicopter flew overhead with a siren blaring and voice saying simply, "The water is coming."

Police Chief Tom Hicks said he expected that more than 5,000 of the city's 6,000 residents would be forced from their homes.

"We're an island," said San

Storm coverage was prepared by staffers Dan Bernstein, Terry Colvin, Bob LaBarre, Carla Lazzareschi, Bill McKenna, Herb Pasik, James Richardson, Darrell Santschi, Tim Skrove, Gail Wesson, Tom Willman, Scott Zonder.

Jacinto police Sgt. John Mauch. "All the main streets are cut off."

First hit were mobile homes in the eastern end of the city. The mobile home parks were soon under several feet of water. Flows at the break and west of it appeared to be five to seven feet deep.

"It was three feet deep when I left," said Virginia Mansberger, who fled the Caravana Mobile Lodge on East Main Street. "I grabbed my coat and my tax returns and ran."

Four helicopters, one with a physician aboard, flew over the city, rescuing residents from rooftops and streets. Police officers, sheriff's deputies and volunteers rounded up as many boats, even rubber rafts, as they could to reach residents trapped in their homes.

Farmhouses were cut off near the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Cedar Street, where the break occurred. Some were rescued, but authorities did not know if all residents of those houses were able to escape before the water reached them.

Many residents fled to the San Jacinto Community Center and then were bused to the Hemet Fairgrounds evacuation center. But by 10:30 a.m. the city was cut off from Hemet, and Mauch estimated that perhaps 1,000 persons would have to be put up at the community center, the Moose Lodge and churches.

"It's getting worse," Police Chief Hicks said, as he prepared to appeal to military officials at March Air Force Base for more helicopters and large trucks. Four-wheel-drive vehicles could not make it across many streets.

Denise Rivituso and her husband were pulled off the roof of their mobile home at Mountain (See LEVEE, Page B-4)

1,300 residents evacuate homes in Palm Springs

PALM SPRINGS — National Guard troops were called out today as at least 1,300 Palm Springs residents were evacuated from raging floodwaters.

A levee in the Palm Canyon Wash collapsed, a Tahquitz Wash levee began to weaken, and a bridge providing the only access to a cluster of posh homes was washed away.

One homeowner said his house, located across from the broken Palm Canyon levee, was being inundated. "The water is coming right at us," said Joe Henderson, whose Smokewood Avenue home is located in the

hard-hit southeast section of the city. "All our trees have been ripped up. Everything is gone. We can't do anything."

Shortly before 6 a.m. an earthen levee in the swollen Palm Canyon Wash collapsed, sending water into several neighborhoods along the southeastern stretch of Highway 111 — the city's main thoroughfare. County flood control workers had plugged the dike by 9 a.m. and said the flooding had stopped. But flood control officer Douglas Isbell described the situation as "tenuous."

Residents were rousted from

their beds as early as 2 a.m. as city police ordered them to evacuate because of extreme flooding danger.

Between 50 and 100 National Guard troopers were dispatched to the city to guard against looting in the temporarily abandoned neighborhoods. The troopers, who were requested by the city and expected to arrive by noon, also were being asked by police to inspect the conditions of several dikes and levees.

In today's first wave of evacuations, about 800 residents in four separate neighborhoods were forced from their homes.

Water pouring through a 250-foot-wide break in the Palm Canyon levee forced the evacuation of homes in the Smoketree Ranch subdivision, south of Highway 111; the El Cielo Road area, north side of the highway; the Araby Tract; the Fairway, Mount Shadows and Crossley Tract condominiums, and Andreas Hills subdivision.

Later in the morning, between 200 and 300 more residents of three nearby condominium projects were evacuated, because of the collapsed Palm Canyon Wash levee.

Still another 200 people were

evacuated from homes in the Los Pueblos area near the Palm Springs Municipal Golf Course course after an earthen levee in the Tahquitz Wash began to crack, according to city spokeswoman Julie Baumer. A county control official said the levee was most likely weakened when it took on water from the flooded Palm Canyon Wash.

Prior to the latest flooding, city officials said the past week's storms have caused \$2 million in damage.

While most of the evacuees have found shelter in hotels and (See 1,300, Page B-4)

The big break in the San Jacinto River levee near the City of San Jacinto was coupled with evacuations in Palm Springs when a levee in the Palm Canyon Wash could not hold back the runoff. The breaks took place about one hour apart on opposite sides of the San Jacinto Mountains.



Patty Duke (left) and Sheila Morriarity evacuate San Jacinto by walking through water on San Jacinto Street near Seventh in early stage of flooding.

Staff Photo by Jim Edwards

San Jacinto flood victims

6,000 strangers become good friends

(Other flooding pictures and stories on Pages A-1, C-1, C-2, F-1 and F-3.)

By DARRELL SANTSCI
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

SAN JACINTO — Six thousand strangers became very close yesterday. We came from different streets and different backgrounds. Some of us were sleeping. Some of us were working. Some of us were still cleaning up from a week of nagging rain.

When the day was finished, we all had shared seats on evacuation buses and memories of the screeching sirens and that ominous voice — almost like a science fiction movie — saying, "The water is coming. The water is coming." All 6,000 of us are not likely to forget the day the levee broke just east of San Jacinto and turned this community into a ghost town.

It was at times hectic and at times comic. It was at all times tragic. In numbers of people affected, yesterday's flood was the worst disaster in this city's history.

"I remember when I used to live along the Mississippi River and it flooded in 1927," Mildred Box, 58, said as she took a seat on the evacuation bus. "We loaded everything we could in a little boat and paddled to safety. That was the worst thing I had ever been through — until this."

The buses that carried homeless people to the evacuation center at the Farmers Fairgrounds in Hemet normally carry school children. There were a few children on the buses yesterday, but they were outnumbered by nervous adults and shivering dogs and cats.

Only a few hours before, just after 7 a. m., this sleepy town found that the concrete levee protecting it from the rampaging, deeper-than-ever San Jacinto River had collapsed.

I stood, less than 10 minutes after the levee collapsed, on the relatively dry pavement of Mountain Avenue a half-mile south of Seventh Street.

Water was flowing into a small mobile home park on the west side of the

street. Water was streaming out of the broken levee a short distance away to my left. Police officers and sheriff's deputies were ordering residents of the park, on my right, to evacuate. By the time the residents reached their cars the water was too high for some of them to drive.

The flooding water crept slowly and silently toward me.

The water rose to my ankles and I retreated. The water rose to my knees and I retreated. The water kept coming and I kept retreating.

Police already had sealed off the east end of Main Street by the time the water turned from Mountain Avenue westward onto Main. The water was filling low-lying farmland on the eastern city limits and flooding a few scattered farms, but continued to advance at the same unnerving pace.

The silence was broken as the water approached the school district offices on Vernon Avenue. By that time the water had fanned out along several streets and was gushing along Seventh Street.

Sirens blared and helicopters suddenly roared overhead. Residents wiped sleep from their eyes as they came out of their homes to see what was happening.

Police Chief Tom Hicks reluctantly ordered the evacuation of a few streets on the east end of town. A few minutes later the evacuation numbers had grown to 100, then 200 and then 500.

Then, as the water formed two massive rivers and cut its way toward the downtown business section, residents were no longer waiting for orders to evacuate. Main Street was lined with cars fleeing the flood waters. Shopkeepers stood outside their shops, debating whether to flee or to stay and guard their stores.

A helicopter swooped low overhead and the voice on the loudspeaker befuddled and terrified residents. "The water is coming," it said. That's all it said. "The water is coming. The water is coming."

Residents ran out of their homes to see what was happening. Some could

hear only a mumble and yelled frantically to their neighbors.

Despite appeals from officers in police cars for people to evacuate slowly and calmly, some people panicked. Some grabbed their children and drove away. Others ran for several blocks before realizing they had nowhere to go.

As the water moved inexorably toward the Five Corners intersection, the heart of San Jacinto, a man collapsed on Main Street in front of City Hall. Paramedics labored to revive him as the water, now only a few car lengths away, edged nearer and nearer.

The man was unconscious for more than 10 minutes before he was loaded into an ambulance and taken away. The water touched the wheels of the ambulance as it left.

By 8:30 a. m., less than an hour and a half after the levee broke, the San Jacinto Community Center was filled with activity. The center, on relatively high ground a short distance from the rivers that had once been Main and Seventh streets, was filled with refugees and their pets.

Poundmaster Linda Cook scurried between her duties of finding temporary shelter for soggy puppies and helping unload injured persons and others who had been rescued by helicopter and let out adjacent to the center.

Telephones gradually went dead throughout the city. Anxious to contact loved ones and family members who had not yet been rescued, the refugees lined up dozens deep at phone booths. A few arguments broke out.

Don Baker stood by the door of the Community Center and stopped a policeman as he passed. "Have you heard about the animals?" Baker asked. "I hear they are turning loose the animals."

Baker's ranch on the north end of San Jacinto Street was flooded. He and his wife escaped, but the horses remained penned up. "I'm worried about them," he said with a sense of urgency. "If somebody doesn't get out there, they'll drown."

Word spread through the communi-

ty center that all of the roads leading out of the city were cut off. "We're on our own," Sgt. John Mauch said at the police station next door. "We're now an island."

Volunteers prepared to bed down the stranded at the Community Center, the Moose Lodge on Main Street a short distance away and at a couple of churches.

We were tired and hungry and wet and some of us were concerned about the availability of blankets and other necessities, but we knew that the authorities and the volunteers were equally tired and hungry and wet and concerned. We waited.

At the police station, telephones rang constantly. Reports that would have summoned all cars on an ordinary day — a woman stranded on her rooftop with the water rising, a heart-attack victim trapped in his home, a man stranded on his rooftop, a youngster trapped on a rooftop, a diabetic facing coma if he cannot be evacuated, a paraplegic who could not drive his car to safety, an entire family trapped on a rooftop — became routine calls.

The rooftop refugees had to wait their turn for boats and rubber rafts to reach them. The medical emergency cases had to wait their turn for helicopters and ambulances.

Outside the police station, volunteers were beginning to swarm in with recreational vehicles, medical supplies and anything that could float.

Refugees poured in the front door, offering to make themselves useful in the evacuation.

Volunteers soon became too plentiful, especially as roads leading out of the city became inaccessible even to four-wheel-drive vehicles. Police turned down an offer of assistance from a Hemet man who said he had a carload of medical supplies.

"He can't get through," Sgt. Mauch said. "What we need are doctors. If he was a doctor, I'd tell him to come ahead."

As the last remaining highway links to Hemet closed, boats became the only

practical transportation. Volunteers grabbed rowboats, power boats, canoes, kayaks, rubber rafts and anything else that would float.

Some residents chose to stay with their homes, sending other family members to safety.

By noon, bus drivers from local school districts were braving the floodwaters of San Jacinto and State streets to ferry refugees to a Red Cross evacuation center at the Farmers Fairground in Hemet.

"I thought we were going to the fair this year," one woman said as she boarded a bus, "but I never dreamed it would be like this way."

The wait on that school bus was perhaps the most nerve-racking experience of the day for most of us. Just as our hopes rose, a sheriff's deputy announced that the road was closed again. We got off the bus.

A few minutes later, crews were able to shore up San Jacinto Street and the flood waters had receded enough for traffic to pass. We got back on.

The ride along San Jacinto Street took us past flooded homes, abandoned floating cars and a few steadfast residents trying futilely to dig out.

The sun broke out from behind a cloud as we passed the soggy intersection of San Jacinto and Commonwealth Avenue. Smiles broke out and friendly conversation picked up. We got to know each other.

By the time we reached the fairgrounds we were so busy talking to each other that we hardly had time for family and friends who were waiting impatiently at the evacuation center to see how we were.

We stepped briskly off the bus and touched grass for the first time.

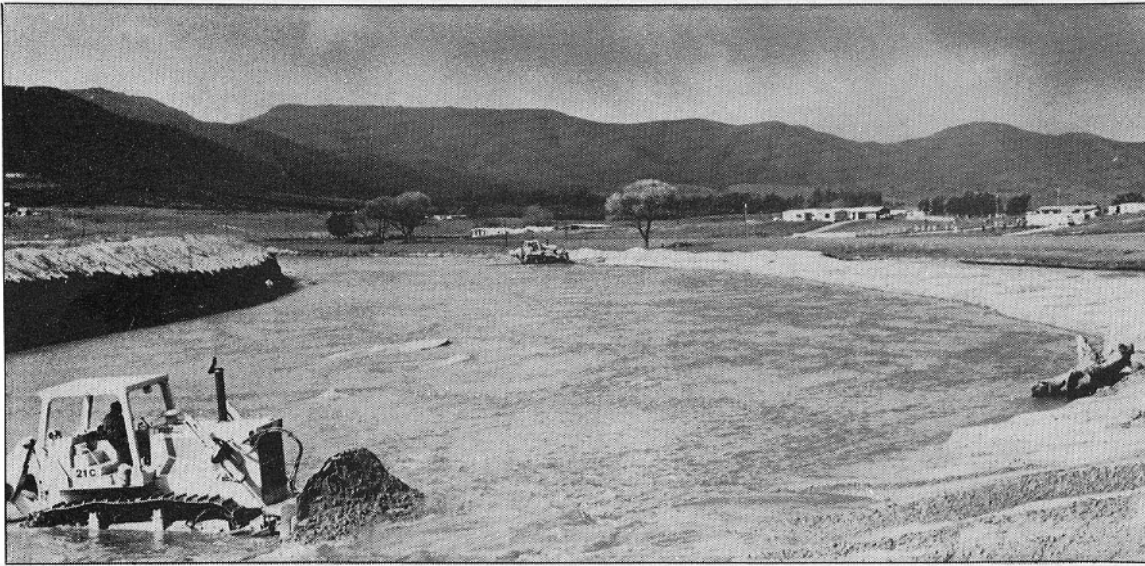
We had an ordeal ahead, for sure. Nobody knew whose homes were damaged and to what extent and nobody knew when residents of San Jacinto would be able to return.

But we were dry, we could eat and we were safe. Most of all, we knew we had all lived through something we would never forget.



Roger and Arlene Coley take some personal belongings in suitcases as they head for a Palm Springs evacuation center. They are walking along Barona Road after leaving their home, which was threatened by the raging waters in Palm Canyon Wash.

Staff Photo by A. J. Kmiecik



Equipment operated by Army Corps of Engineers was pushing sand from bottom of Murrieta Creek near the town of Murrieta with an eye toward rebuilding a levee that the flooding creek washed out Tuesday.

Staff Photo by Bill McKenna



Staff photo by Jim Edwards

A stalled car at the intersection of Shaver and San Jacinto streets yesterday in flooded San Jacinto is a common sight to a passerby.



Two pieces of heavy construction equipment lie nearly submerged (left) in Palm Canyon Wash in Palm Springs following a levee break yesterday.

Staff photo by A. J. Kmieck



Staff photos by Darrell Santschi and Gail Wesson
An evacuee from San Jacinto is assisted toward the evacuation center in Hemet.



Once evacuees arrived at the Red Cross center in Hemet, many lined up at pay phones to tell relatives they were all right.



San Jacinto evacuees were brought to safety in Hemet in a variety of vehicles, some borrowed, some personal. Once inside the evacuation center, they were able to find food and coffee.



Cut off from the city by a raging wash

(More weather pictures and stories are on A-1, County Page, F-1 and F-3.)

By **HERB PASIK**
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

PALM SPRINGS They stood on a hillside overlooking the raging Palm Canyon Wash which had once been spanned by the Bogert Trail bridge linking Andreas Hills with the outside world.

The bridge was gone now and so were the stranded residents' hopes of evacuating the exclusive hillside development of high-priced homes and condominiums.

Some of them had packed and left temporarily as a precautionary measure during the previous three days of flooding here, but those affluent residents had made the mistake of returning to their homes again and again between storms.

There were about 50 of them on the far shore and they were isolated, without utility service and with only a limited supply of water. When the bridge, the only way in and out of Andreas Hills, broke up during the night and was carried away, water and utility lines went with it.

Some three miles downstream of Andreas Hills, the Palm Canyon Wash earlier had sent a torrent of water crashing through the dike on the north bank of the natural drainage channel.

That was shortly before 6 a.m. yesterday and the escaping deluge inundated the low-lying Smoke Tree and Araby Drive areas, which are dotted with older, single-family homes and condominiums.

Hundreds of residents in that section of south Palm Springs were hurriedly evacuated from their homes by police officers, firefighters and other city personnel as muddy water swirled along streets and cascaded over lawns. Most were allowed to return home yesterday evening, but the fear of more flooding hung over them.

To the north, residents in the area of El Cielo Road and Escoba Drive, who live in relatively new homes, faced a similar flooding threat when the floodwaters shot across Highway 111 and poured down toward them.

Those residents, including Police Chief Tom Kendra and Mayor Russ Beirich, began evacuating their homes after being alerted by the wail of a siren on a fire engine moving along endangered streets.

"There was no water in my house, not yet anyway, when we left," said Kendra. "But the water was running curb to curb at El Cielo and Sonora Road and all the way down Sonora."

The mayor showed up shortly before 8 a.m. at the Red Cross Disaster Service Center in the Palm Springs High School cafeteria, where some 200 sleepy, dis-



Palm Springs Mayor Russ Beirich urges everyone in the evacuation center to be calm.

oriented, but relatively calm evacuees were gathered.

"The Bogert Trail bridge is down the wash," Beirich told the apprehensive evacuees, who ranged in age from infants to those in their 70s and 80s.

"Rim Road is open," he informed them, "but power lines are starting to tip over at the mouth of the road near the Araby (Highway 111) bridge. Highway 111 is closed at the bridge and it's no time to be out and messing around."

"It's hectic out there and they're trying to close the levee that broke near Smoke Tree." The levee had been sealed by them.

The evacuees, except for a few asleep with their heads slumped on top of the cafeteria tables, seemed encouraged when Beirich told them, "The only good thing is that the water level is beginning to drop. The heaviest water is in the streets and not in homes, and the National Guard will be here in a couple of hours from Long Beach to guard your property."

Then, accompanied by City Manager Norman King, the mayor strode across the school grounds to the nearby gymnasium, where about two dozen other evacuees were asleep or resting on cots.

He repeated his earlier report on the flood situation and said, "We'll try to keep you updated every couple of hours."

Hanna Unger of Barona Road, who had been reading a paperback book while reclining on a cot, quivered when a change-of-class bell jangled in the gymnasium.

But there were no passing periods for high school students

yesterday. There were no students. Classes in the Palm Springs Unified School District had been canceled since Monday because of recurrent heavy rain and flood threats in this desert resort city.

Flooding became more than just a threat early yesterday as the rampaging waters of the Palm Canyon Wash began chewing away at the foundation of the four-lane Araby bridge and forced closure of Highway 111 at that point to all but emergency vehicles. Two lanes were later reopened.

Residents of affluent Southridge Drive, atop which stands the mushroom-shaped new home of comedian Bob Hope, clustered on a hillside above the bridge, many of them taking photographs, as a tractor shoved tons of dirt against the east end of the undermined structure to shore it up.

About 20 yards away, dangling in midair from an aerial line, two Southern California Edison Co. crew members worked cautiously to disentangle de-energized power lines from a shattered pole. The lines once sup-

ported by the pole dipped into the turbulent current of muddy water sloshing beneath the damaged bridge.

Meanwhile, about two miles northeast of the bridge, residents of the Fairway and Mountain Shadows condominium developments and the Crossley Tract of lower-income homes were alerted by firefighters and city crews to evacuate because of an impending break in the dike along the combined Tahquitz Creek-Palm Canyon Wash.

The same residents had been alerted Tuesday, and some of them had left their homes temporarily when the dike near the 18th green of the Palm Springs Municipal Golf Course was ruptured by the raging waters of earlier storms and runoff from the mountains. That break, however, was sealed before any residential flooding occurred and caterpillar tractors were thrown into a massive effort yesterday to prevent a recurrence of the earlier break.

When Jim Hines of the city Building Department knocked on the door of a condominium at Mountain Shadows and urged those inside to evacuate yesterday, a woman replied, "Oh, no, not again. We're not going anywhere this time."

Hines said many of the residents he had alerted chose to stay in their homes despite the warning.

One woman who was loading luggage and a golf bag into the trunk of her car stopped a passer-by and asked worriedly, "Is it true that the dam has broken?"

"Sorry," he replied, "there is no dam in Palm Springs."

With another storm reported on the way and more flooding

expected, city officials took steps to guard against possible looting of evacuated neighborhoods.

About 160 California National Guard troops were called in and arrived here in the early afternoon to protect against possible looting in flood-affected residential areas and to take part in an around-the-clock flood watch along the endangered banks of the Palm Canyon Wash and Tahquitz Creek.

"Most of the evacuated homes are upper-class houses and contain a lot of valuable property that could be looted," Police Sgt. Mike McCable cautioned the assembled National Guards troopers from Long Beach and the east San Francisco Bay area during a briefing in the police training center where they were to be billeted.

The troopers were expected to free hard-pressed police officers for patrol and other duties.

Lt. Col. Dick Leyva, commander of the 49th Military Police Battalion in Walnut Creek and military field commander for the guard operation here, said his troops, who are sworn law enforcement officers, had "no orders at this time to shoot anyone" when asked how possible looters would be handled.

"We have ways to handle looters without having to shoot them," he said. They were armed with .45-caliber pistols, batons and nightsticks.

One of them, Staff Sgt. Duane Gordon of the National Guard's 649th Military Police Company in Alameda, said the Bay Area had experienced "a lot of power outages" and some flooding in the latest storm to hit California before he was flown to Palm Springs.



Staff Photo by Jim Edwards

Owner Jim Cox and Dennis Harbitz try to close doors to business on San Jacinto Street after water flowed in — and out the back.



Staff Photo by Fred Bauman

This view of the spreading water in San Jacinto shows San Jacinto High School at right.



Staff Photos by Bill McKenna

Richard Donaman uses a raft to get to a friend's mobile home at the flooded Holiday Park campground on Lakeshore Drive at Lake Elsinore.

Lake Elsinore rises steadily, threatens city

By PAT O'BRIEN
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

LAKE ELSINORE — One and one-half stories of a three-story pink house have disappeared into the lake and the water is still rising.

The occupants have packed their belongings and left.

Their neighbors put their own furniture in storage and are living in a camper parked on higher ground than their house, which has just started to be flooded.

Deborah Roberts, manager of Campers' Village on Lakeshore Drive, said, "Everybody is picking up and pulling out, trying to save what they can. It's a pitiful mess."

The lake, which is expected to rise and spread within the next few days further than it has since 1916, was measured at 1,257.70 feet above sea level at noon yesterday and was rising at three-quarters of an inch an hour.

Bud Wood, general manager of the Temescal Water Co., said the volume of water coming over the Railroad Canyon Dam in nearby Canyon Lake has increased greatly yesterday from the day before. The flow was 3.2 billion gallons per day yesterday

compared with 620 million on Thursday.

This water, coming down the San Jacinto River, as well as runoff water coming from the Ortega Mountains, will continue to drain into the lakebed even if no more rain falls over the weekend, according to City Manager Ira Pace.

"I wish I could shut it off, but I can't," he said.

The city issued a statement, which was posted throughout town and handed out to school children, that warned Lake Elsinore residents that the lake was expected to reach its overflow mark of 1,261 feet above sea level at noon today and could reach 1,265 feet at noon Tuesday if runoff continues at the rate experienced this week.

Although the rise of the lake is slow enough that most people have time to remove their belongings before the water reaches them, there are still trailers, fences and sheds being swallowed by the lake.

Even an outhouse was found floating on the lake. The lake has been closed by the county Public Health Department because of sewer and septic tank leaks caused by the flooding.

Sixty percent of the Lake Elsinore Recreation Area Inc. on Riverside Drive is under water, and office manager Harry Specht said he was rowing a boat yesterday around his mobile home.

Many other trailer parks are out of business and have trailers crammed against each other on what is left of high ground.

The biggest fear here is that the lake will continue to fill and spread and inundate much of the city.

The natural outlet of the lake that takes water to the Temescal Wash towards Corona has become heavily clogged by silt, trash and weeds since it has never been regularly maintained. It is supposed to carry water after the lake level reaches 1,261 feet.

This ditch has been the center of much controversy and has now become a major source of concern as the lake expands.

The city decided this week, after years of refusing to maintain the ditch because it was on private property, to clean the ditch because of the threat of the flooding. The city appealed to other governmental agencies for help, but has found itself receiving much advice but little action.

The City Council decided

Thursday to contract for special equipment to scoop the mud out of the ditch until it reached the 1,260 level. Work on the ditch is expected to begin today and continue through the weekend.

City Manager Pace said he did not know how long it would take to complete the job.

The Lake Elsinore Recreation and Park District board of directors decided at a special meeting Friday to back the city and to appropriate \$30,000 toward cleaning the ditch.

The county Flood Control District, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state Department of Parks and Recreation are reluctant to take responsibility for the ditch, which is part of a complex water rights agreement between the City of Lake Elsinore and the Temescal Water Co.

"We consider it the city's responsibility," county flood control Engineer Doug Isbell said yesterday. He said the county was providing technical assistance to the city and had loaned a bulldozer to work on the ditch earlier in the week, but it had sunk in the thick mud.

The Army Corps of Engineers sent a survey team to Lake

Elsinore and corps' representatives are scheduled to meet with city officials again today, but the agency has told the city that cleaning the ditch will not solve the problem.

"The need is for something far greater than what they are asking us to do. It's like trying to patch a gunshot wound with a Band-Aid," Maury Peerenboom, chief of public affairs for the corps, said yesterday.

Peerenboom said there were numerous problems to be considered, including the effect of water from the lake going downstream toward Prado Dam, the effect on Lake Elsinore of tearing up bridges and streets while working on the ditch, and whether cleaning the ditch would really relieve flooding problems.

The city has argued that any amount of relief would help even if it won't solve the problem and has agreed to hold the corps harmless in the event of any legal difficulty.

Herb Hampton, senior engineer for the state Department of Parks and Recreation, said yesterday he did not think the state would be liable for any damage done by the state-owned lake because it is in a natural flood plain and the state had not altered it.

"There is a natural control here in the Temescal Wash," he said. He added that the state would not officially become involved in altering the wash because of water rights issues.

He said he did not foresee any attempt to dredge the lake to lower the level to relieve the flooding because "it wouldn't accomplish anything" and there would be nowhere to put a "tremendous amount of dirt."

Hampton said the state would continue with its studies to find a continual dependable source of water for the lake before stabilization plans would be put into operation.

He said it was too early to say what would happen to the operation of the state park, but "it certainly is going to change the nature of the operation."

Meanwhile, water is within 15 feet of the front door of the hangar at the now-closed Elsinore Parachute Center. A wall of decomposed granite and sandbags has been erected around the hangar in an attempt to save it, according to Marilyn Perrine, an employee.

The phones at city hall and the Red Cross evacuation center have been so busy that a new 24-hour phone number, 674-6871, is being used for general information, according to Pace.

People needing evacuation information may call the Red Cross at 674-2164. Fifteen people stayed at the evacuation center at the Elsinore Elementary School Thursday night and 60 had signed up yesterday for meals and aid, according to Mayor Nap Harris.

Mud . . .

(From Page B-1)

to the mud-filled street in front of his home.

The clean-up work is hard, he said, but not as discouraging as the fear of looting. "I was afraid of people coming in . . ." he said. "There was a bunch of strange-looking people here (Thursday) afternoon."

Pat Gartzke, 58, surveyed the damage in the park and offered encouragement to her neighbors.

"This is not going to get us down," she said. "I was through the San Fernando Valley earthquake in 1971 and that was worse than this. I wasn't frightened."

She came back yesterday to pick up clothing and medicine. "I left in a bit of a hurry when the water came," she said. "I grabbed my purse and left."

Keith and Katie Culwell have a home on East Seventh Street a short distance from Villa Del Monte.

"We were up before seven (Thursday morning)," Katie said. "We saw all these police cars and trucks going by with their lights and sirens going. We thought there was an accident."

"Nobody ever came and told us the levee was breaking or that we should evacuate," she said. "When we saw the water spreading over the field, we knew something was wrong."

The Culwells called a niece across town to take them out, but police stopped the niece before she could get through. They were finally rescued by a tow truck driver — a man they were trying to contact yesterday to thank. Like many residents of the flood-torn area, the Culwells owe their lives to a stranger.

Joe Cryderman emerged from his Vernon Avenue home yesterday morning and breathed a sigh of relief. Water was surging along Main Street a few feet away, but Cryderman's home had managed to escape the water.

"Everybody got water around here but me," he said. "We had the option of leaving, but I said no. I own my house and I'm staying. As long as I can sandbag my house I'll be all right."

Cryderman's all-electric home was powerless Thursday night, so he cooked dinner on a barbecue and ate it by candlelight.

"We stayed awake until 5 in the morning," he said. "We would doze a while and then get up and look out the window at the water."

He tried to get bottled water delivered to his home, but he said police wouldn't let it through.

The residents of Vernon Avenue who stayed the night were standing in the parking lot of the school district offices on Main Street yesterday morning. They exchanged stories about the onslaught of water and the ordeal of what was a power-less night for residents on the west side of the street and a night with electricity on the east side of the street.

As they joked and lifted each other's spirits, two youngsters plowed through the foot-deep water on Main Street riding bicycles. They were followed a few moments later by a truck full of National Guardsmen. The contrast amused them.

But, a mile away, a cattle truck overturned and pinned 30 animals in running water. Twenty-three of them drowned. Firefighters managed to free seven cattle, who fled before authorities could round them up.

It was one more disaster in a week of disasters.

Bids to be sought on Perris sewer plant

PERRIS — Bids will be sought Monday on a million-gallon-per-day regional sewage disposal plant.

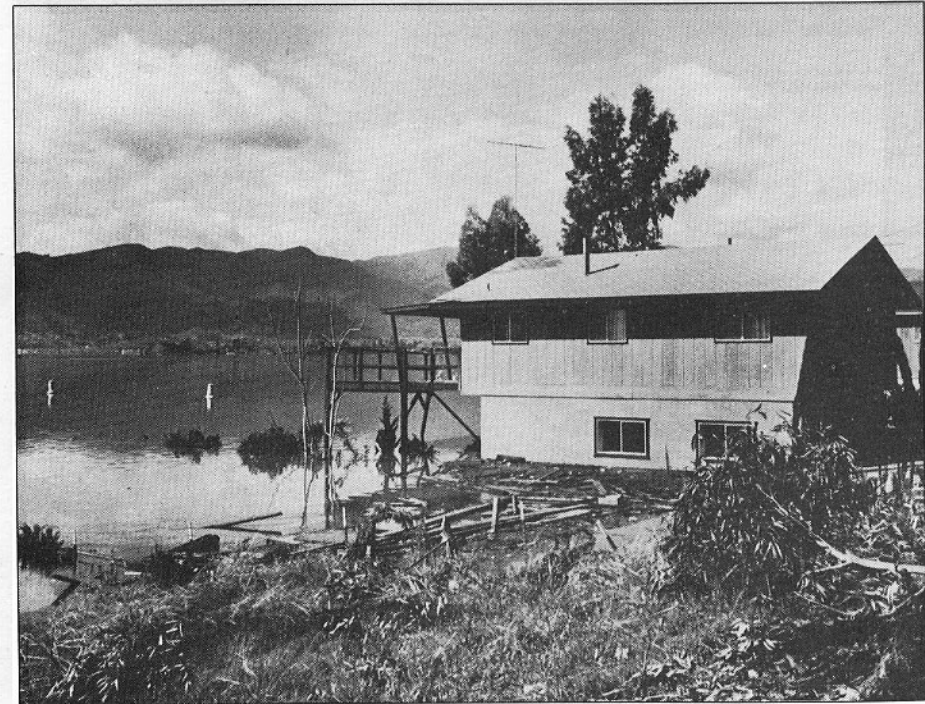
Eastern Municipal Water District will begin advertising for bids on the \$5-million plant Monday, according to Jim Buntz, EMWD engineer.

He said bids already are out on construction of a transmission line from Perris to the regional plant site and for constructing a dike around the 229-acre facility near Watson Road and Interstate 15E.

The district has estimated the total project at \$6.6 million, with the state and government paying most of it. The local share totals \$1,042,625.

Buntz said construction on the transmission line and dike is expected to start by mid-summer.

The Perris Valley Regional Water Reclamation Facility, as the disposal plant is formally named, will serve a wide area, including Perris and Romoland.



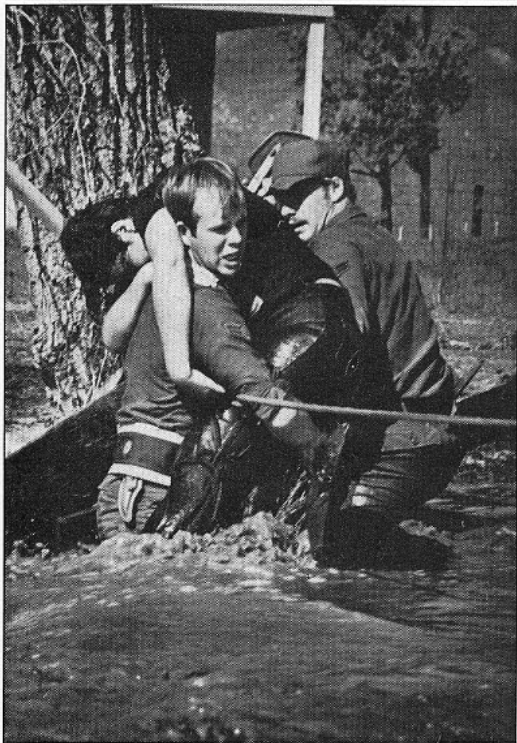
Many homes along Lakeshore Drive at Lake Elsinore have water at the front door already.



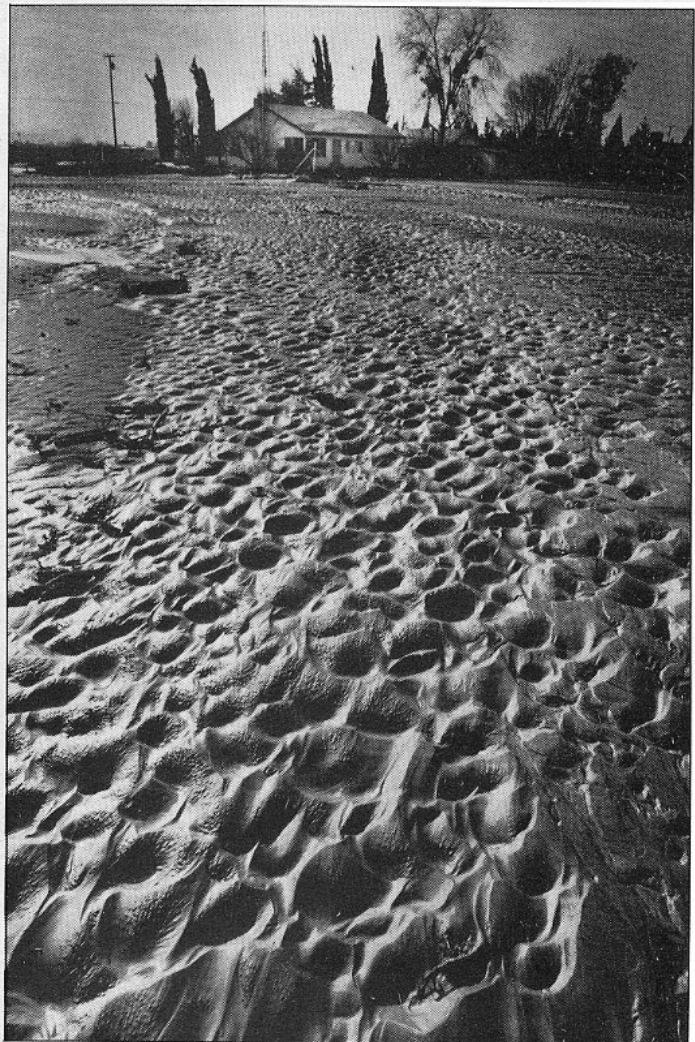
Staff photos by Jim Edwards

San Jacinto's scars

San Jacinto, reeling from the break in a levee on the San Jacinto River, faces a massive cleanup task after widespread flooding. Above, clothes hung out before Thursday's heavy floods bore the mark of the water's highest level yesterday. At right, mud flats were created near where the levee gave way. And below, in a scene from Thursday's torrential flooding, a 15-year old girl is rescued from rushing water on a San Jacinto street by Airman 1st Class Mark Strong, left, and Airman First Class Jeff Gorman. The girl was later listed in good condition with only an arm injury.



Staff photo by T.C. Perkins





Robert Henderson reading the morning newspaper in the evacuation center.

A night in the life of an evacuation center

Story and photos
by DONNA KENNEDY
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

HEMET — At 3:15 a.m. Friday there was still a continuous murmur of voices in the gym at Hemet Junior High School.

Evacuees wondered aloud how high the water was in/around their San Jacinto homes, whether they had put their photo albums high enough to stay dry, whether the chickens had survived. Mostly they wondered when they could go home.

When the San Jacinto River levee broke Thursday morning under pressure from nine days of storm water, the entire town was evacuated by car, four-wheel-drive vehicle, helicopter and boat. Volunteers quickly prepared the Hemet Fairgrounds as headquarters, and then registered and moved the 3,100-some evacuees to homes, churches and schools for the night.

Once 200 of the displaced people were fed, medicated and safely inside the warm gymnasium at Hemet Junior High, they settled down to compare notes on their mutual disaster.

One woman said she was in the bathtub when she heard the loudspeaker warnings from the helicopters, another was vacuuming. "I didn't hear anything," Carol Escorpio said. When she was roused, she put her daughter, Tonya, on an evacuation truck, climbed on herself and fell off. The truck left without her. "All I could think of was her getting caught in the water," she said.

Her friend, Treva Sinott, was stoic about her

latest misfortune. "About 10 years ago I lost everything in a tornado; three years ago I lost everything in a fire. Now this."

"After a while it gets tiresome."
Most of the San Jacinto residents were evacuated before the heaviest onslaught of water came, so they could only guess what had happened to their houses, trailers and apartments.

"We don't know," Herb Culvertson said. "There was a foot of water. They wouldn't let us go back." His wife, Marion, barely had time to grab her purse.

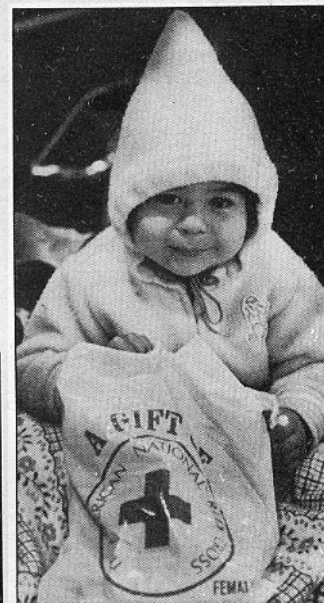
The evacuees were bewildered to find themselves lined up elbow to elbow on canvas cots beneath the basketball hoops.

At the same time, they were happy to be there instead of wading down San Jacinto Avenue looking for a dry spot.

They joked, comforted their dogs and cats and generally tried to make the best of the situation.

Some watched a TV account of Beverly Hills people mopping up damage in their homes.

And the children traded adventure stories:
(See LODGING, Page 6)



Ezequiel Ramos, 2, checks out a Red Cross packet.

Hettie Collins and her dog, Sheba, rest after evacuation.



Joan Caspi showing a customer lingerie in her store.

New York Times photo

Those thinking about opening businesses change their minds after an unusual class

By ANNE-MARIE SCHIRO
New York Times News Service

"A lot of people think a store means you get to travel to Europe and get your clothes free — it's not anything like that," said Howard Partman, co-owner of San Francisco Clothing and teacher of a course on how to open and run a boutique. He has been giving the course for three years at the midtown campus of the Parsons School of Design in New York.

"When we first opened in San Francisco in 1968," Partman said, "you could take your bar mitzvah money and open a shop if you liked clothes. It was fun. It was a different lifestyle. Now it's a business. You have to be very professional and know what you're doing. You have to be versatile and willing to sacrifice a lot. Running a shop is no 9-to-5 job."

"In 1968 to '71 you could open a store for \$5,000 or \$10,000. Rents were cheap, and you didn't

need fancy fixtures for a jeans shop. To open a 10,000-square-foot store now, you need a minimum of \$200,000.

"I bring all this out in the first class so people can withdraw right then if they're not serious."

Some of those who have stayed with the course through all 12 sessions were interviewed for their reactions.

"It convinced me I'm not ready to open a boutique," said Theresa Ritterstein, a young mother who had been interested in opening a children's boutique. "It saved me a lot of time and money."

"I was interested in learning about business law, retail terminology and financing," said Leonard Bess, a designer. "I'm hoping to start my boutique in 1982. I expect to be severely undercapitalized, but I'm a gambler."

Alda Spina, who is freelancing in the wholesale industry, said, "I feel I could

open a shop now and would do things differently."

An important part of the course is visits by shop owners, store buyers, legal experts and security people who discuss their specialties.

Doris Blank took the course a year after opening a boutique called Intuition in Armonk, N.Y., and finding that "you can't expect help from someone else who has a shop."

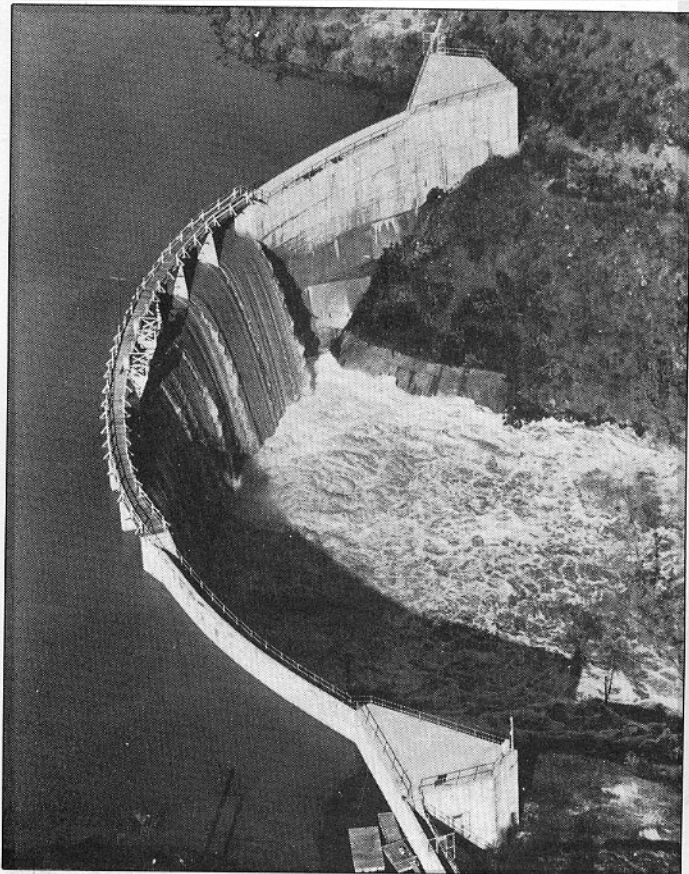
"They get paranoid if you ask questions," she said.

"The course was good for me at that time because there were specifics I wanted to know. I knew what questions to ask. I had been an art dealer before I opened this shop."

Another graduate is Joan Caspi, who four months ago opened a lingerie shop called Wife Mistress on Lexington Avenue near 74th St.

"I was a psychiatric nurse," she said, "but I'd always been interested in having a boutique. I

(See TIPS, Page 6)



Staff photos by Jim Edwards

Water flows over Railroad Canyon Dam, eventually feeding the rising Lake Elsinore.

9-day storm series was longest, most costly on record in county

It was a storm series that wouldn't quit.

Nine days of relentless rain — dumping well over 10 inches in some areas — that caused tens of millions of dollars in damages, left thousands homeless, washed out roads and killed at least nine persons.

It was the county's most expensive and most widespread series of storms, as well as the county's longest rain siege in memory, county disaster officials said yesterday.

They estimated damages at \$54.9 million by week's end, as President Carter declared the county a federal disaster area. But yesterday, disaster officials

were still counting. The estimate does not include damage to private property in the unincorporated areas or to state and federal highways.

"It's higher than that," said John Jacobs, operations officer for the county Disaster Preparedness Office. "But we don't know how much higher."

Still, the \$54.9 million estimate surpassed the estimated \$18 million in damage left by flooding in January 1969. It was higher than the \$38 million in damage caused when tropical storm Kathleen hit the county desert hard in 1976.

And, Jacobs said, the recent storm — unlike the storm of 1976

which hit Palm Desert the most seriously or the storm of 1969 which wreaked havoc in Palm Springs and Riverside along with Whitewater — covered more ground, bringing trouble to a widespread area of the county.

Hardest was San Jacinto where damage was estimated at roughly \$30 million, Jacobs said. Palm Springs and Lake Elsinore, along with Corona, Jurupa, Riverside, and the Sage area — have had their troubles.

Added Jacobs: "I think this is definitely the longest" storm series the county has experienced. The 1969 storm lasted three days while Kathleen held (See RECORD, Page B-4)

Lake Elsinore continues to rise

Cleanup under way across the county

Efforts to clean up after last week's storms continued in the county yesterday, with San Jacinto residents struggling to return their city to normal, Palm Springs traffic snarls easing and more roads reopening throughout the county.

But runoff water continued to flow into Lake Elsinore, raising the lake within a foot of its overflow level and increasing the danger of water spreading through much of the city. As the lake slowly rises, work to clear a channel out of the lake was to speed up today.

Clear and dry weather eased relief efforts yesterday. A new storm, following the path taken by several others during the last ten days, was approaching from the South Pacific but there is "little threat of heavy rain," said meteorologist John Blank of the National Weather Service.

While the storm may bring rain to northern California, only scattered, light sprinkles and heavy clouds are expected this afternoon and tomorrow.

County road crews continued on 12-hour shifts yesterday, re-

Coverage of the county's storm aftermath was provided by staff writers Dan Gaines, Darrell Santschi, Bob Webster and Gail Wesson.

pairing damaged roads. Highway 243 between Banning and Pine Cove remained impassable for most vehicles, although traffic was allowed to use the road. Highway 371, and Highway 79 between Temecula and Aguanga remained closed, according to the California Highway Patrol. Highway 79 through Lamb Canyon to Beaumont was reopened Friday night, although motorists were urged to be cautious of mud and water. Some parts of the Sage, Reed Valley and Aguanga areas remained isolated by washed out roads.

State and federal officials surveyed flood damage in Riverside and San Bernardino counties by helicopter yesterday, including Rep. Jerry Lewis, R-Highland, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials and State Senators Robert Presley, R-Highland and Ruben Ayala, D-San Bernardino.

The Lake Elsinore City Council reached agreement yesterday afternoon with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to clear a channel through the middle of that city that would take water out to Temescal Wash, an action delayed because of a complex water rights agreement. The corps, which was expected to survey the job today, may spend \$1 million on the job, according to City Manager Ira Pace.

Clearing the channel — which runs along Spring Street — would block the city's major east-west arteries, including Graham Avenue. Until a temporary bridge is built, residents wanting to travel across Spring Street would have to use Interstate 15 or travel around the lake.

The city released the Army corps of responsibility for relocating utilities, acquiring right-of-way and disposing of debris taken out of the wash, Howie Torn, mayor pro-tem, said.

At 5:30 p.m. yesterday, the lake was at 1259.74 feet above sea level, rising about three-fourths of an inch each hour. Most homes near the lake are in water, al-

(See COUNTY, Page B-4)



A hydroponics garden under floodwaters at Lake Elsinore as seen from helicopter.

Mosquitos expected to thrive in county due to heavy rains

By SANDY PAVIC
 Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

Huge populations of mosquitoes are expected to start hatching in about a month due to the recent heavy rains.

County Health Department entomologist James Lang said the water-logged county will provide ideal breeding grounds for the species of mosquito that carries encephalitis. "Once the water stands for a while," he said, "the habitat is going to be real nice." He said ponds standing in sunlight are the best source of the mosquitoes because the sun causes algae to grow in the water. Algae is the main diet of mosquito larvae.

Lang said that of the 48 mosquito species occurring in California, "culex tarsalis is the principal vector for the various encephalitic viruses found in California. It's a good biter and can bite severely." He said other mosquito species, which will also be abundant, can carry various diseases such as malaria.

Donald Boling, director of the environmental health sector of the county Health Department, said mosquito problems will be most severe in areas surrounding the recent San Jacinto River flooding. These areas include San Jacinto, Nuevo, Lakeview, Per-

ris, and Lake Elsinore. He said problems are compounded in these areas because they do not lie within the boundaries of either the Northwest or the Coachella Valley Mosquito Abatement districts, the only two mosquito agencies in the county.

Also, since the passage of Prop. 13, budgets for mosquito agencies have been cut by 53 percent. "Somehow we ought to get some federal aid or some state aid to assist us in the problems we know are coming," Boling said. "We know we'll have mosquito breeding potentially in the millions because of all the water."

The mosquitoes are expected to hatch as soon as the rains are followed by a warm spell. The mosquitoes will thrive until October.

"The best thing to do," Lang said, "is to make sure all holes in window screens are fixed, to keep doors and windows closed and to wear long-sleeved shirts whenever possible."

Entomologist Leonard Moore of the Coachella Valley Mosquito Abatement District said heavy populations of mosquitoes are expected in the desert areas, as well. "We expect to have a lot of mosquitoes coming off the standing water," he said. "But we do

have the men here to take care of the situation if we have an outbreak. We are prepared to handle anything that might happen in the way of mosquito production."

Lino Luna, director of the Northwest Mosquito Abatement District said, "We're as ready as we'll ever be." He said he's already instructed his crews to keep a sharp eye out for new ponds left by the rains. "There will be water standing in areas that don't normally hold water," he said. "The men will have to be on the lookout more so than in other years. And we'll be asking people to come in and get mosquito fish for their pools, dough-boys and ponds that have filled up with water."

Residents living within a mosquito district can obtain mosquito fish free of charge. Other county residents can buy the fish for \$2 per bag. A bag contains 6 to 24 mosquito fish.

Luna said there are other measures county residents can take to help minimize the problem. "The best thing the public can do," Luna said, "is to make sure anything in their yards that has collected water is thoroughly dumped out. You'd be surprised how many mosquitoes can come out of a cup of water."

Finally, the rains quit. The cleanup began, except at Lake Elsinore, where the lake continued to rise and to flood homes and businesses.

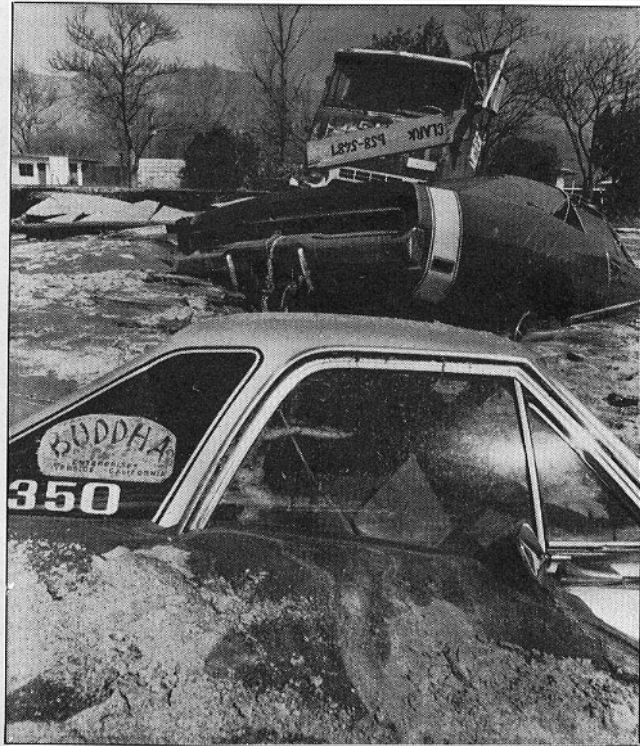
Aftermath . . .



National Guard helicopters ferried feed to a 500,000-hen chicken ranch in Aguanga, 25 miles southeast of Hemet yesterday. Mud-

slides sealed off the chicken ranch and the hens were placed on limited rations to preserve the feed that was transported in.

Staff photo by Gail Wesson



Floodwaters carried massive waves of mud in San Jacinto Thursday, burying dozens of automobiles. These are on Idyllwild Drive,

the most seriously flooded street in San Jacinto. Water was as much as eight feet deep in parts of this street.

Staff photo by Darryl Santschi



Mobile homes like this one on Idyllwild Drive were torn in half by flood waters in San Jacinto. Residents returned yesterday for their first clear look at the damage in the city.

Staff photo by Gail Wesson



Buildings lie sunken in acres of mud and water near Lake Elsinore's north shore yesterday. Residents must wait for the

floodwaters to recede substantially before beginning the grim task of digging out.

Staff photo by Jim Edwards



Floodwaters ripped out sections of pavement on Idyllwild Drive in front of San Jacinto High School Thursday, forming stepping stones for these two youths who returned to the area yesterday. Police sealed off the street moments after this picture was taken and ordered the youths to leave or face arrest.

Staff photo by Darryl Santschi



Staff Photo by Pat O'Brien

Nothing goes right

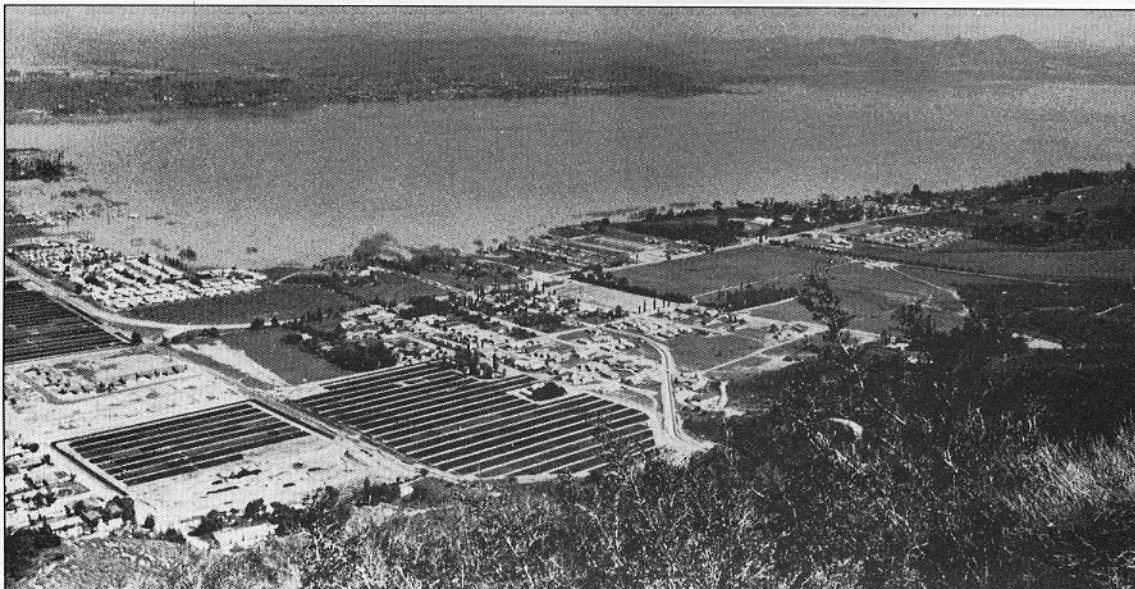
This tractor was put into operation to help clear the overflow ditch at Lake Elsinore and allow release of water from the rising lake, but it sunk in the muck, instead. Scene is along Collier Avenue. A story on Lake Elsinore's problems is part of the County Page weather story.



Staff Photo by Bill McKenna

Mirror

San Bernardino Mountains are reflected in flood waters from the San Jacinto River as they pass through Nuevo on the way to Lake Elsinore yesterday.



Spreading

From the Ortega Highway, Lake Elsinore looks only wide and calm. Down below, the spreading water is driving residents from their homes.

Staff Photo by Pat O'Brien

City finds problems with mud, other flood matters

By GAIL WESSON
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
SAN JACINTO — At first the mud from the flooding was a headache.

Now it's in demand for use in repairing streets — and there may not be enough of it.

City officials and a private contractor helping the city with the cleanup are concerned that some private haulers are trucking mud out of the city at a time when the city needs free dirt for its own repair work.

"There is dirt going out of this town faster than we can stockpile it," said Fred Dowalter, a local contractor who is coordinating street cleanup for the city.

Dowalter, who began helping Saturday, said the haulers have been encouraged to dump mud at specified city sites so it can be dried and used, but some already have contracts with contractors who need fill dirt for projects outside the city.

The concern was voiced at a special City Council meeting Monday night, but the council decided it was not serious enough to warrant trying to stop the out-of-town haulers.

City Manager Tom Hemphill said yesterday that people who have equipment to haul dirt away from their property should call the Police Department to find out where the city wants it dumped.

The dump sites may change from day to day, depending on where the city needs dirt. People who do not have a way to remove the mud should pile it next to the street curb, out of the way of traffic, and city crews will remove it.

Some dirt piles were reaching six feet tall on some streets. While private haulers are working during the day, most city supervised crews are working from evening to early morning, during slower traffic times, to lessen safety hazards.

Dowalter told the council that there were 60 truckloads of mud removed from city streets Sunday evening.

The council met Monday to discuss a broad range of flood- and cleanup-related subjects.

The council appointed Hemphill as the city's representative in applying for federal and state disaster relief loans and grants.

The council also approved a resolution to temporarily suspend formal bidding requirements for contracts related to flood-related repairs.

By state law the city must follow bidding procedures, which include public notices and specified time lines, for expenditures in excess of \$5,000.

City Attorney Don Wickham explained that the law permits suspension of the requirement in the event of a disaster when the work is needed for the immediate protection of the public's safety and property.

Work to repair city streets and utilities began soon after the waters from last Thursday's flood started to subside. City workers at the same time began inspecting the safety of buildings and, in some cases, posting notices that they should not be occupied until certain repairs are made.

Street problem areas include Idyllwild Drive around Tiger Lane behind San Jacinto High School, Camino Los Banos, Idyllwild (See FLOOD, Page B-3)



Bill Volk, 11, J. D. Volk, 6, and Buck Volk, 9, play in one of the many mounds of dirt in San Jacinto. They are on First Street.

Staff Photo by Gail Wesson

Perris-area homeowners win frontage road battle

By LORIE HEARN
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer
After losing a series of battles, a group of rural homeowners in an area north of Perris yesterday won the war.

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved the homeowners' choice for location of an industrial frontage road along Interstate 15-E between Water Street and Nuevo Road.

The alignment was a compromise reached last Saturday in last-minute meetings between the North Perris Homeowners Association and two industrial property owners.

It means that the frontage road will be constructed east of Webster Street, through the land that is now earmarked for industrial development, creating more of a buffer between the

rural homesites and the planned industrial development.

The alignment, initially approved by the supervisors last June, and supported by the county Planning Commission in hearings over the past few months, showed Webster as the frontage road from Water Street almost to Citrus Avenue. It veered to the east away from the homes at a point slightly north of Citrus.

The residents, who didn't find out about the road plans until they had been on the drawing table for nearly two years, recently hired an attorney, a traffic engineer and an environmental specialist to help argue their case.

They said the originally adopted alignment would increase noise and pose safety problems in mixing residential, equestrian and industrial traffic on a single road. That contention also was supported by the Val

verde School District, which voiced concern about safety, where school buses would have to pick up children on the busy road.

The compromise reached Saturday still appeared to be acceptable yesterday to the homeowners and industrial property owners John Harvill and Ladd Penfold. One man, though, was very unhappy.

Albert M. Hyatt, president of Hyatt Die Cast and Engineering Corp., in Cypress, said the compromise alignment would "butcher" his 17-acre industrial site to about 10 acres. That is smaller than the 11½ acres he said his business has outgrown now in Orange County.

The homeowners' alignment divides Hyatt's property, leaving a chunk between Webster and the new road.

In making the motion for approval of the compromise, Super-

visor Norton Younglove, who represents the area, said, "All things considered, there is no perfect answer available, but this is as close to the right answer as we are able to come up with."

He reminded the homeowners and the industrial property owners, however, that the supervisors were approving only the alignment and could not legally endorse other provisions in the written compromise.

Those provisions, privately agreed to by the two parties, included no industrial access to Webster Street along the frontage road, and support of an industrial park zoning for the section of land between Webster and the frontage road.

The homeowners' alignment divides Hyatt's property, leaving a chunk between Webster and the new road.

In making the motion for approval of the compromise, Super-

\$17 million water loan vote passes

Eastern Municipal Water District voters last night approved by more than 6-1 a \$17.7 million loan plan to bring northern California water into the district.

A low turnout of only 15 percent was attributed by district officials to the single-item ballot and travel problems caused by recent floods and current cleanup operations.

With votes tallied from 46 of the district's 60 precincts, the unofficial vote count at 9:30 p.m. showed 10,058 favoring the district's borrowing action, with only 1,524 opposed.

The measure needed the approval of two-thirds of the district's voters to pass.

The vote gives the district permission to borrow \$17.7 million from the federal government as part of a \$24 million distribution system connected with the parent Metropolitan Water District's Riverside Treatment Plant and Lake Perris.

The district plans to build 92 miles of pipeline and 11 pumping plants to bring water from northern California.

District officials asked for approval of the measure on two main grounds: 1 — it will provide less-polluted water and 2 — California must abandon its reliance on Colorado River water.

The district currently distributes water from the Colorado River to its customers. The northern California water contains only 450 parts per million of pollutants, while water from the Colorado River contains 750 ppm of pollutants.

Under present plans, treated northern California water will begin flowing into the district in four to five years.

By a 1964 U.S. Supreme Court decision, California will lose as much as half of its supply of Colorado River water to Arizona in 1984.

Baseball signups set for boys

HEMET — Boys from 8 to 12 years of age can sign up for the youth baseball program sponsored by Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District.

The fee is \$10 and registration will remain open at the district office through March 14.

Tryouts will be held March 15 at the San Jacinto High School baseball field, according to Dave McArthur of the district staff.

The following events sponsored by the Lake Esinore Valley Chamber of Commerce will be postponed and rescheduled:

Feb. 27
Meet the Candidate Night
Feb. 28
Board of Directors Meeting
March 8
Beauty & the Beast Pageant

IRS revokes tax-exempt status of Sun City Civic Association

SUN CITY — The tax-exempt status of the Sun City Civic Association, owner of the community center here, has been revoked by the Internal Revenue Service.

The revocation will become effective when the association receives written notification, according to Larry Ringey, association president.

Ringey said the IRS has taken the position that organizations such as the Civic Association must open their facilities to the public at large or lose their tax-exempt status. The Civic Association will appeal the decision, Ringey said.

Civic Association directors haven't said what would happen if the IRS revocation is upheld. One possibility is an increase in the annual \$30 payment that members now make to use the facilities.

Meeting with the IRS in Los

Angeles last week were Ringey; Jessie James, a member of the association committee studying the proposed revocation; and corporation attorneys Melville Hirschi and William W. Floyd, Jr., of the Riverside law firm of Best, Best & Krieger.

They met with Keith M. Loebig, IRS exempt organization specialist, and Joseph Rios, IRS agent.

The Sun City attorneys argued the association is entitled to tax exemption as a non-profit corporation as provided for under IRS codes.

The association plans to appeal to the regional office in Los Angeles, according to Ringey. No date has been set for that appeal.

The Civic Association has had tax-exempt status since 1963. It operates Sun City's \$1 million community center for its 8,000 members, who pay annual assessments of \$30 per year.

When a river pours through a city, the aftermath is muddy.

Lake Hemet spillway erosion eyed; Elsinore rise eases

By BOB LaBARRE and DARRELL SANTOSCHI
Press-Enterprise Staff Writers

Water flowing over one of two Lake Hemet dams has eroded sections of the dam spillway, but officials believe the structure is still safe.

"It is not a hazard," said Leonard Hale, general manager of the Lake Hemet Municipal Water District. "The condition is stable."

He said, however, that another series of major storms such as those that occurred recently could undercut the dam, dumping an estimated 2.6 billion gallons of water into the San Jacinto River.

A downstream levee broke last week, flooding the city of San Jacinto. The levee is being re-

paired. The San Jacinto River drains into already-overburdened Lake Elsinore.

The flow of water into Lake Elsinore has slowed, while residents of San Jacinto continued to dig out. And the Red Cross has stopped airdrops of food and supplies to ranchers high in the hills of Rancho California isolated by floodwaters from the recent storms. Sunny skies prevailed, but the weather service saw a chance of rain by Sunday.

Water at Lake Hemet, southeast of Hemet in the San Jacinto Mountains, is held back by two dams, maintained by the water district. The main one, built about the turn of the century, is 135 feet high, and overflow from it plunges into a pool before flowing into the San Jacinto River.

The larger dam is located on the northwest side of the lake.

The smaller dam on the southwest side is 16 feet high, and its top is 12 feet lower than the larger dam. The spillway, built about 30 years after the larger dam was completed, drains into the San Jacinto River.

According to Hale, water spilling over the smaller of two dams has eroded about 40 cubic yards of granite rock at the base of the spillway. The water district fears that if the spillway is eroded too much, the force of the water behind the smaller dam will cut through the base.

The top of the smaller dam has been raised temporarily to restrict water flow and to stop further spillway erosion.

Lake Hemet Water District

officials hope to have the Army Corps of Engineers place heavy boulders, fastened with concrete, along two damaged sections of the spillway to reinforce the work. Hale estimated that repair work could take less than a week.

John Burns, a field engineer with the state Division of Safety of Dams who inspected the structures yesterday, agreed with Hale's assessment of the problem.

"It's no immediate problem," he said, "to anyone downstream. The dam itself is in beautiful condition. But it's something they and we are watching. I'm satisfied that they are doing what needs to be done."

Burns said the problem developed a week ago after the last

of the ruinous storms struck. Runoff flows poured over both dams. At one point, a 31-inch-high flow of water streamed over the smaller dam. Since then, flows from the main dam have fallen to two inches, as runoff from the mountains has tapered off.

If heavy rain should return to Southern California, dam officials are worried that water could erode the spillway's apron or bottom and water could leak out from behind the spillway.

"In the event of another storm, it is possible," Hale said, "but not likely, that water could erode a tunnel underneath the apron and cause water to leak out."

Since the smaller dam on the lake is 16 feet high, 16 feet of wa-

ter could drain from the lake, Burns said.

Hale estimated if the spillway were undermined it would take five or six days for water from the lake to leak into the river. He said 8,000 acre-feet of water from the lake, which holds 13,500 acre-feet, could drain into the river.

At Lake Elsinore, meanwhile, a fast-working backhoe and slow-rising lake gave officials new hope that the city's residential and business districts would not face new flooding.

"Things are better today," City Manager Ira Pace said yesterday, adding the lake is expected to reach its overflow point next week, not this weekend as earlier predicted.

By next weekend, Pace hopes a 20-man crew directed by the Army Corps of Engineers would have dredged out the mile-long Elsinore Spillway Channel which will carry lake overflow into the Temescal Wash.

"I'm getting more optimistic because of several things," said Pace. "Our equipment is making about 1,000 feet a day on the channel, the flow from the (San Jacinto) river is slowing down, and the sun is shining."

But Pace cautioned that as the lake rises to its overflow point — 1,265 feet above sea level — more homes located in the lake's huge basin would be flooded. "We know the lake will reach 1,265 because there's enough water above us to push the level that high." He said the lake was rising at the rate of one-eighth inch per hour yesterday compared to one-fourth inch the day before and one inch per hour last week.

Massive clean-up operations continued in San Jacinto, where a San Jacinto River levee collapsed one week ago, sending mud and water into hundreds of homes and businesses. The water that flooded the community is gone, but the mud — now turning to dust under a hot sun — remained. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers inspection team yesterday began a two-day inspection of the levee.

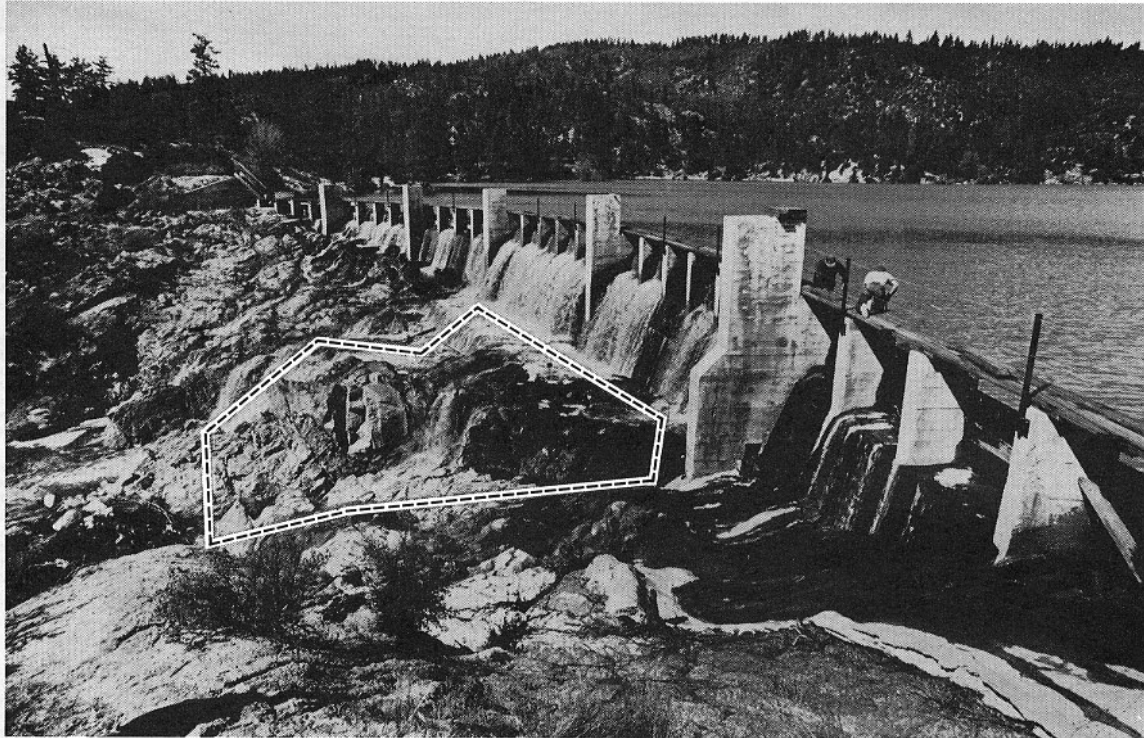
Most county roads in the hard-hit Anza and Sage areas are passable. The one remaining problem area is Benton Road in Sage. The road was cut in several spots by a meandering stream which in some cases isolated residents.

The last two Red Cross airdrops — four bales of hay to a ranch and food to a trailer park, both near the community of Sage — took place Wednesday, said Dave Rudawitz, Red Cross official working out of a Hemet office.

Those last drops, by a helicopter leased to the state Department of Forestry, came on the tenth day of such airborne aid operations to flood victims in the county. The airdrops at times also involved Air National Guard helicopters, said Rudawitz.

Meanwhile, the road network east of Rancho California remained broken in several places by high-running creeks. In some places, such as the Tualatola Valley, vehicular access still was not restored, but residents were able to walk through the ankle-deep

(See SPILLWAY, Page 2)



Staff photo by A. J. Kmiecik

Hemet water district employees work yesterday atop the Lake Hemet spillway, which has been eroded by

water flowing over the dam. Broken line shows the rock section of the spillway where erosion has oc-

curred. Despite the overflow, officials of the Hemet water district believe the dam is safe.

Presley to change bill that benefits contributor

By RICHARD ZEIGER
Press-Enterprise Capitol Bureau

SACRAMENTO — After members of a state Senate committee objected to a Sen. Robert Presley bill that could have substantially benefited one of his biggest campaign contributors, Presley said he would change it.

In the new version, the measure is less likely to benefit Hemet farmer James Minor. Minor's attorney, Enos Reid of Riverside, drafted the bill and asked Presley to introduce it.

Presley, D-Riverside, said he "didn't (specifically) know what Reid was trying to do" in the first version. He said the revised bill would reflect more viewpoints.

As originally drafted, Senate Bill 1382 would have severely restricted the state secretary of resources' authority to reject requests by property owners to avoid financial penalties under a state agriculture preservation law.

The law, known as the Williamson Act, gives property tax breaks to owners of agricultural land who promise to keep their property in agriculture.

A landowner who wants to get out of the agreement can petition the city or county in which the land lies. He then must repay property taxes plus a cancellation fee. The state receives this fee because it reimburses the county or city for lost property taxes caused by the land being in a preserve.

The city or county has the authority to waive the fee. But the state secretary of resources can reject the local government agency's decision.

Since the law was passed in 1971, the state has allowed a can-

cellation of fees in only two cases.

In 1978, Minor and his partner, Herk Bouris, owner of Bouris Ranches, received permission from the Riverside County Board of Supervisors to withdraw 2,200 acres of farm land in the Winchester area from preserve status.

The cancellation fee on the land would have been \$238,000. However, the board reduced that to \$100,000.

When the fee waiver reached Secretary of Resources Huey D. Johnson, the cancellation was rejected.

Norman E. Hill, assistant secretary for resources, said the cancellation was rejected because the request did not meet the legal requirement that the land would not be developed.

Hill said the owners refused to say how they would use the land. Reid said yesterday Minor and Bouris hadn't decided what to do with the land but added, "the land's no good for farming, that's for darn sure." He said the owners still want to withdraw it from agricultural preserve status.

Hill said Minor and Bouris had been offered a hearing on the matter, but had not accepted the offer.

In the bill Reid drafted, however, Johnson's authority would have been limited to determining that the local board or council had "substantial evidence" to decide the cancellation was in the public interest and met the law.

"Substantial evidence" is one of the least demanding legal tests, requiring only that there be a showing there was some reason for the action, according to Sen. Alan Sieroty, D-Los Angeles. He was one of several members of

the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee who criticized the bill Wednesday.

"In my opinion what you're doing is eliminating the state involvement, and I don't think that's what you want to do," said Sieroty.

He said that Reid's version gave the resources secretary only a "very narrow test to apply. He doesn't have any independent judgment."

Presley responded that Johnson could make "arbitrary" judgments, since there were no guidelines in law or regulations to follow when reviewing appeals, nor was there any formal appeal process or the right to a hearing.

Reid, however, told the committee he intended to cast the resources secretary in a role similar to that of an appellate court judge who rules only whether proper procedure was followed without independently appraising facts.

Committee members contended that the judgment could not be left to the local agency alone, since that agency had no financial incentive to require the cancellation fee.

Presley said after the meeting he had not realized Reid's draft would have eliminated nearly all of the secretary's discretion.

Presley said he was aware Minor could benefit from the legislation, but had not talked to him about it. He said he did not know where the land is or how much the owners stood to gain if the fee were canceled.

Presley said he had been contacted by Bouris and had discussed the bill with him and Reid.

Minor contributed \$3,500 to Presley's 1978 campaign. That was Presley's third largest contribution and the largest from an individual.

It is not uncommon for legislators to introduce measures at the behest of constituents or lobbyists, nor for these people to draft the bills.

In fact, bills are rarely actually written by the legislators. Most often the wording is devel-

oped by the Legislative Counsel's office.

Presley said when he brings the bill back to the Revenue and Taxation Committee it will contain specific guidelines for the resources secretary to follow in reviewing requests for fee cancellations.

Those guidelines would be developed in consultation with Johnson's office, Presley said.

No sooner had most areas begun to dry out than a new flooding fear developed. Erosion was discovered in some rock under the spillway at Lake Hemet Dam in the San Jacinto Mountains above the cities of Hemet and San Jacinto.

—RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA—

Arthur A. Culver
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Editor

'Disaster' aid

As rains continue to threaten Riverside County, there is no question that this area and much of the rest of Southern California belong in the official "disaster" category that the governor has proclaimed.

Riverside County is a mess with nearly 100 roadways closed because of water and slides. Three county residents have been killed by the storms and another is missing. Only some heroics — and luck — prevented that toll from rising during the dramatic helicopter crash and rescue on the Santa Ana River the past weekend.

One of the adventurers whose ill-timed raft ride made the costly rescue necessary has said "God is the only reason" they were saved, which, to say the least, begs the question of why they were out on the river in the first place.

That there is heavy mail outraged by their lack of judgment is wholly understandable.

People have been driven from their homes. Property damage in the county is in the millions of dollars and reportedly may be as high as \$1 billion in the state.

With this county and others declared disaster areas by the governor, there at least is an opportunity for state assistance, including low-interest loans for rebuilding, for those badly hurt. And, in the final tally of storm damage, there may also be federal assistance available.

Being designated a "disaster" county perhaps brings home with more impact the seriousness of the storm damage to those fortunate enough to have been spared it. The victims, of course, need no such reminders.

Who gets what

It may be a sign, as the news stories indicate, that Leo McCarthy has broken the back of the move to oust him as Assembly speaker. One of his supporters has just been elected by the Democratic caucus to a new leadership position.

Assemblyman Howard Berman, the man who wants to become speaker and who is still quite a few bricks short of a load, attempted to tie that election to a deal which would reinstate a couple of his supporters on committee seats which they lost during this ongoing Democratic power struggle. The move to undo the retaliation, if that's what it was, failed.

Ostensibly the victim of retaliation, too, is Assemblyman Walter Ingalls, who may have rapid transit legislation removed from the jurisdiction of the Transportation Committee of which he is chairman. The Riverside Democrat, an early Berman backer, may have picked the wrong side.

Note what this is all about: which man will be speaker, whose friends will be rewarded and whose enemies punished, who will get the choice committee assignments and, in the background, how Democratic campaign money will be spread around.

That kind of thing is the primary business before the State Assembly these days. It is a battle of perhaps crucial importance to those within the confines of the Democratic caucus but, more generally throughout California, it is becoming a battle of monumental indifference. One does, however, begin to wonder what else — what else of substance — will come of this session of the Legislature.

The boycott begins

Exercising the conqueror's prerogative, the Soviet Union has removed no troops from Afghanistan. That being the case, the U.S. Olympic boycott is officially on.

Moscow will still have its summer games. The designated host-city and the International Olympic Committee seem set upon that course. And the Soviets, and the committee, will naturally try to get as many athletes as they can from countries which are not particular about participating in fun and games in the capital of an invader.

But from some 50 other nations — at least by White House count — there have come public and private expressions of support for staying away. Some of that support is soft — as soft and as reluctantly given as that of the U.S. Olympic Committee, whose members do not deny that they will eventually endorse the president's decision but want to stall a month longer before doing that.

President Carter's deadline, set a month ago, was probably announced then with more authority than he actually has — unless his administration is prepared to get into the nasty business of denying travel permission. At the time of his original announcement, too, he was probably ahead of the growing sentiment that the boycott movement has been picking up. To that extent, he anticipated public opinion, or helped to shape it.

The Moscow games could probably be put together again if, overnight, every last Soviet soldier were to slip back across the border. But no one expects that to happen.

No attention thus turns to the effort to organize athletic competitions outside of Moscow. It would probably be more practical if they were held in several cities; it would be best if the various sites were mainly outside the United States, if that can be done.

The White House has the torch. Let the Alternative Olympics begin.

Spunk on the stump

Republican presidential candidate John Anderson, who has said he is "willing to do things that would make me a one-term president," reflected that rather unpragmatic political philosophy when he called for gun control at a meeting of the Gun Owners of New Hampshire.

The 58-year-old Illinois congressman, who previously went out of step with fellow Republican campaigners in Iowa by supporting President Carter's grain embargo against the Soviet Union, did it again before a New Hampshire group that showed it doesn't cotton to visitors messing with its gun racks. His call for gun registration drew so many catcalls that he was forced to halt his remarks. Six other Republican presidential candidates took an opposite view with opposite results — applause.

"I don't understand," said Representative Anderson before the crowd's boos dismissed him. "What is so wrong about proposing that we license guns to make sure that felons and mental incompetents don't get hold of them?" He said he only wanted to make gun purchases by criminals more difficult. "I don't see how reasonable people can be against it."

This was another spunky performance by a candidate who at least has to be admired for not couching his positions to suit particular audiences.

'We know it's cockeyed, but it's the only roulette wheel in town'



Readers' Open Forum

FOOL'S ERRAND

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

Mr. Robert Lomell, along with five others, rode innertubs on the Santa Ana River during flood stage. The trip went sour and the fools almost drowned.

Mr. Lomell's statement to the paper was, "God is the only reason we're here." I really don't think God was the reason they survived. Two of his angels, in a helicopter, were.

J. RUSSELL ANDERSON
Riverside

NO ONE'S LAUGHING

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

How disgusting to read in the Sunday Press-Enterprise the risks police and firemen took to rescue six dummies who stupidly decided to take a ride on the river in innertubs.

Mrs. Moore, wife of one of the "sailors," thought the ride would be funny. Some thinking. Maybe if these six characters were presented with a bill for the rescue efforts and the value of the helicopter, it wouldn't seem so funny wasting taxpayers' money....

E. M. OLSON
Sun City

THE CONSEQUENCES

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

I read with disgust the story on the rescue of the innertubbers by law enforcement helicopters. What were those six people using for brains when they decided to float on the Santa Ana?

Because of their stupidity, lives were threatened, an officer severely injured and a police helicopter destroyed — our tax money. All this because of six people's own desire to be stupid.

SHERRY COVINGTON
Riverside

IN THE EMERGENCY

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

I met a man who does his work and is conscientious. He also worries about people.

The water in the Murrieta Creek was rising and it was pouring with rain. Mr. Darrell Aker on his dozer was deepening the creek with water up to the top of his tracks, so that the people of Murrieta Valley would still have their land.

Thank you, Mr. Edwards, for having men like Mr. Aker working for the Flood Control Department.

RAYMOND R. PETLAK
Murrieta

NOISY NEIGHBOR

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

As property owners in the City of Riverside, we are quite disgusted with the situation which the City Planning Department and St. Catherine's Church have allowed to occur in relationship to our home and property. Our property and privacy have been subjected to the daily noise and litter resulting from the partially completed high school parking lot on Nixon Street. The required block wall, separating our back yard from the parking lot, has never been built as per the zoning change notification which we received from the city.

In investigating the annoying delay we discovered that a variance had been granted allowing St. Catherine's to defer the construction of the wall for one year — one year of lunch-time trash,

loud music and drag races only feet away from our back door.

... We have nothing against having the school parking lot in our neighborhood, we wish that St. Catherine's-Notre Dame school would be forced to comply with the building codes. We just want our right to our privacy....

JOHN and CHERYL BASH
Riverside

A RECORD OF FAILURE

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

How can anyone seriously consider re-electing Jimmy Carter to the presidency? His record is one of almost total failure.

Before he took office, the Russians were not threatening the Persian Gulf or allowed to keep armed units in Cuba, the world was beginning to envy the 4% percent inflation rate of the U.S., the prime lending rate was in the single figures, and the Congress was able to deal with the president in a consistent manner, based on his generally consistent policy.

Now, however, the Russians appear to be expanding at will, a small country has held us hostage and ridiculed us for over three months, the inflation rate and the prime lending rate hover around 15 percent, and Congress tends to be inconsistent and even unruly, lacking leadership from the president.

Why is it so difficult for us to see what the rest of the world seems to understand perfectly? The United States has become a floundering giant with no real leadership. Our president talks tough but does very little in the way of follow-up because he is too weak....

L. W. HOLM
Banning

APPEASEMENT FAILS

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

I would like to suggest that the letter by James F. Newell (Open Forum, February 17) represents the height of folly. I don't know how old Mr. Newell is, but he might well be advised to read Chamberlain's 1939 speech and then go on to read a history of World War II. As someone once said so very well: "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Mr. Newell's ideas regarding giving power to the U.N. and adopting a Swiss-type foreign policy are so hilarious as to bring tears to the eyes! I wonder whether he'd like to become a watchmaker and have some Soviet overlord tell him how many rubles he'll get for his product.

B. L. WAGONER
Hemet

OLYMPIC WINNERS

Editor, Press and Enterprise:

When the 1980 Winter Olympic Games at Lake Placid, N.Y., are but a memory, I am sure that the free people of the world will have cause to remember, with admiration, the stand taken by the team from the Republic of China, who refused to bow down to the unreasonable and unthinkable demands of those who apparently have a preference for godless communism.

I am confident that, on their return to Taiwan, the team members of the Republic of China held their heads high, as they had a right to and, as free men, they should.

EDWARD H. WATT
Indio



JAMES RESTON

Carter no longer fights on moral grounds

President Carter seems confident and even cocky on the surface these days, but still there is a vague doubt in the night in Washington among his people, as if they felt stronger and more dangerous tides under their feet.

Three things are worrying them: The persistent rise in prices and interest rates, the sudden emergence of young people protesting against registration for a military draft and decline in the confidence in the press and among the allies about the conduct or misconduct of U.S. foreign policy.

Since the days of Franklin Roosevelt, the Democrats have fought elections as the party of the young, the old and the poor, of low prices and interest rates, and cooperation with the allies.

Recently, Carter has been talking about more sacrifices to come, about the possibility of war in the Persian Gulf, higher defense budgets, higher unemployment, new mobile combat units and new missile and description systems. Accordingly, his natural political supporters are now beginning to wonder where all this is going.

In recent weeks, all this has been overwhelmed by the crises in Iran and Afghanistan, during which Carter has dominated both the news and the popularity polls.

The allies from the start, and lately the American press, have begun to question Carter's judgment that Afghanistan was the most serious foreign policy crisis for America since the last World War. And most recently, Carter has begun to agree with them by withdrawing his sanctions against Iran and his opposition to a U.N. commission to investigate the charges against the shah. So he is now being charged with misjudgment and inconsistency.

All his judgments of Soviet intentions to take over the Persian Gulf, his threats of sanctions against Iran, his withdrawal of these threats, his refusal and then acceptance of a U.N. commission to investigate the shah before the hostages were released, leave him vulnerable to political attack, and nobody knows this better than his political and publicity advisers.

In the last year, they have seen Carter dismissed unfairly as a "loser" and a "one-term president," who lacked the qualities of presidential leadership. And then, within a few weeks,

they saw him proclaimed in the press as the unbeatable leader of the Democratic Party, who had destroyed Senator Kennedy and would not only be renominated but re-elected.

That is still their view, but they're not as sure as they sound. The political debate on the economy has not even begun. The price of oil is only a small part of the inflation.

Carter began by proclaiming that unemployment was a greater threat to the nation than inflation and is going into the campaign with a rise in both. Not since the days of Herbert Hoover has a sitting president had a harder economic record to defend.

Carter has another problem, which is harder to define. He came to office believing that a Democratic president and a Democratic Congress could put an end to the confusion between the Executive and Legislative; proclaiming the higher morality, arguing for a government as "good as the people," serving the national interest.

It hasn't worked out precisely that way, and feeling betrayed, Carter has lately been assuming not the best but the worst in his critics, and is now playing hardball politics both at home and abroad.

So we are now seeing, as often before, a "new Carter" is like the "new Johnson" and the "new Nixon" as of yore — fighting as always for re-election, and fighting very effectively, and the guess here is, very successfully. But he is no longer fighting primarily on the moral grounds that brought him to the presidency in the first place, with his appeals for compassion, human rights, arms control and aid to the suffering multitudes of the world.

Nevertheless, maybe he will win — nobody in Washington would bet against it — but the people who believed in the Old Carter who won, still have their doubts about the New Carter, who has abandoned the old philosophy and will soon have to face the economic facts of his record.

Most of his aides, of course, are exhilarated by his success in the popularity polls — and hesitate to question his recent political tactics — but he was down so low a few months ago and is now up so high, that they wonder how long it will last, and even if he'll like it if it does.

New York Times News Service

JACK GERMOND and JULES WITCOVER



Reagan changes lyrics, but not his music

MERRIMACK, N.H. — All last year Ronald Reagan's strategists promised reporters they would be hearing a rash of new ideas from the former California governor once he started campaigning in earnest. Although he wasn't a fresh face, they said, he would be a fresh candidate by dint of these new ideas.

Well, Ronald Reagan is now campaigning in dead earnest up here after his upset by George Bush in Iowa. The lyrics may be different, but the music is just the same. Reagan's song, as crooned here the other day before a meeting of the New Hampshire Hospital Association and with variations across the nation's first primary state, continues to tell the story of how big government is ruining our lives.

In the 1976 campaign, Reagan liked to relate the tale of a company that was ordered by the feds to install anti-pollution equipment or shut down. When it sought to buy the required equipment, it found that the company that made it couldn't deliver because that company was also being throttled by some federal regulation.

This year's version in the gospel according to Saint Ronnie goes like this:

OSHA (for Occupational Safety and Health Administration) sends a representative into a hospital, and he rules that plastic bags must be inserted in all wastebaskets to guard hospital employees against contamination. Then HEW (for Health, Education and Welfare) comes in and says the bags are a fire hazard because somebody might toss a lighted match or cigarette into one of them.

"All the hospital can do," says Reagan, shaking his head, "is have someone watching. If it's OSHA coming, put 'em in. If it's HEW coming, take 'em out." The way he tells it, you can just see that wastebasket specialist keeping vigil at the hospital entrance.

Like any good performer, Reagan has worked some new material into his routine, but has kept and streamlined much of the old stuff that has played well in the past. There remains, for instance, his good "Chicago welfare queen."

In the 1976 campaign, Reagan made her sound like a near-successor to John Dillinger. He said she used 80 aliases, 30 phony addresses and 12 Social Security cards to collect \$150,000 in welfare checks. Actually, she was charged with using aliases to the tune of \$8,000. Now Reagan merely says of her: "In Chicago, they found a woman who was getting checks under 127 names."

Along with the new and not-so-new imagery, there are the old truisms that never change, like: "Balancing the budget and curbing inflation is just like protecting your virtue. You just have to learn to say no." He delivers the lines as if hearing them himself for the first time. But that's, as they say, show biz.

In sum, the new Ronald Reagan is more retread than reborn. The chairwoman introducing him in Amherst said a mouthful. "Ronald Reagan," she observed, "needs little introduction... because we have known Ronald Reagan all our lives."

Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate

The Press-Enterprise is proud of the county-wide staff that produced this comprehensive word-and-picture coverage of the Floods of February.

This is the kind of coverage you get every day in the Press-Enterprise, the only newspaper covering all of Riverside County.

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