

After the quake... Survivor pulled from rubble continues to steadily improve

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Buck Helm astounded his doctors Monday by nodding his head to show he had no pain, despite being trapped for 90 hours in his tiny car under tons of concrete.

"In the next 24 to 48 hours, if he continues the way he is now, he will be out of the woods," Dr. Floyd Huen, medical director at Highland General Hospital, said.

"His love for us and our love for him is one of the major things that kept him going," his former wife, Lorrie Helm, said at a hospital news conference Monday also attended by three of his children.

"Buck is a strong-willed man," she said. "For him to survive this long he has proved it. He's always been there when I needed him, and this is when he needs us."

A wave of joy spread through the hospital at news of Helm's condition, Huen said.

"When he was asked about whether he was hurting anywhere, he shook his head and everybody was incredulous," Huen said.

Helm's condition was upgraded Monday from critical to "very serious" and may improve again to serious, Huen said, adding that Helm was likely to spend two or three more days on a respirator.

Helm, 57, had been trapped in his silver Chevrolet Sprint under tons of steel and concrete since the earthquake Tuesday toppled a double-decker section of Interstate 880 in Oakland.

A ship's clerk at the Port of Oakland's Charles P.

Hamilton Terminal at the foot of Market Street, Helm was headed up the freeway to Emeryville to a legal poker parlor when the quake hit, dockworkers said.

And in the freeway rubble is where he remained, slumped on his right side along the front seat, until rescue workers freed him Saturday.

Helm's kidneys, which doctors had feared were so severely damaged by dehydration that he might need dialysis the rest of his life, appeared to be resuming normal function, Huen said.

When a person is severely dehydrated, the kidneys shut down to preserve the fluids in the body, Huen said. However, doctors had feared that byproducts of muscle damage could have poisoned the kidneys.

"In his case, he has responded so quickly we feel it was just severe dehydration," Huen said.

Doctors felt Helm's recovery was coming along so well that they began feeding him through a tube inserted in his stomach and gave him a pencil and a tablet of paper to communicate.

Helm, 5-foot-11 and 230 pounds, can't talk because a respirator tube has been run down his throat.

However, the broken ribs and chest wall separation appear to be mending and doctors have been lowering the amount of oxygen delivered through the respirator, Huen said.

Mrs. Helm said she has read newspaper accounts of the earthquake to him, and he understands although he drifts in and out of consciousness. He communicates by nodding, blinking and squeezing her hand, she said.

Rescuers lose hope for more life Massive death toll of quake reaches 62

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Freeway survivor Buck Helm improved Monday but crews searching the collapsed highway where he was rescued gave up hope others would be found alive. The death toll from last week's earthquake climbed by three to 62.

Bay area commuters, after conquering heavy morning traffic and rough seas on the first full workday since the quake, faced early and tangled afternoon traffic. In Congress, relief legislation worth \$2.85 billion moved ahead.

"We're very certain nobody's up there alive. We've searched, searched, researched, triple-searched," said Oakland Police Lt. Kris Wraa, referring to the crumpled 1 1/4-mile stretch of Interstate 880 where huge slabs of concrete teetered in the rain.

Asked if officials had given up hope of finding another survivor, she said, "That's fair wording."

With rescue efforts suspended, crews began dismantling a shaky 100-yard section, officials said.

Kyle Nelson of the California Department of Transportation, whose job is to make sure the structure was safe for rescuers, called it extremely dangerous. "Given the right conditions of rain and wind, it could have collapsed," he said.

About 150 residents of a housing project just 10 feet from I-880 joined thousands of homeless because of fears that more of the highway could fall.

Commuters did return to the earthquake-ravaged transit system, many boarding extra trains or a flotilla of ferries because the Bay Bridge from Oakland to San Francisco remained closed.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit system carried twice the normal load and ferry passengers had to stomach rough seas and whipping winds, but there was little of the feared gridlock on the roads.

"I've just been through hell, but heck, I have to admit I made it through it," said John Trowbridge, a commuter who normally would have driven across the Bay Bridge but instead rode a ferry that lurched constantly, battling swells that washed across the tip of the boat.

"It can only get better, this can't get much worse," he said. Helm did get a bit better Monday, doctors said.

The 57-year-old long-shoreman, who spent four days trapped under the freeway rubble in his Chevrolet Sprint before being rescued Saturday, was awake and was given a writing tablet and pencil so he could start responding to questions while on a respirator.

He was no longer in pain and his kidney function improved to the point where doctors no longer think he will need further dialysis, Dr. Floyd Huen said.

"In the next 24 to 48 hours, if he continues the way he is now, he will be out of the woods," Huen said. "When he was asked about hurting anywhere, he shook his head and everybody was incredulous."

Damage from Tuesday's 6.9-magnitude quake topped \$7 billion, surpassing Hurricane Hugo as the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history, according to the Independent Insurance Agents of America.

Two more deaths were reported in San Francisco. One, an unidentified female, was found in fire rubble in the Marina district.

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House committee authorizes billions in aid for quake area

WASHINGTON (AP) — A House committee on Monday approved a \$2.85 billion aid package for areas damaged by the San Francisco earthquake, more than the White House supported but \$1 billion less than the amount pushed by the California congressional delegation.

The plan was approved by voice vote in the House Appropriations Committee after the panel rejected, 26-7, the state delegation's request for \$3.8 billion. Committee chair-

man Jamie L. Whitten, D-Miss., said more money could come later but he didn't want to send too much, too soon with too few controls.

"My whole pitch is to do something now, straighten it out later, and don't waste any money in the meantime," Whitten said.

Rep. Silvio Conte, R-Mass., the senior Republican on the committee, said the Bush administration could accept Whitten's proposal. The White House had proposed earmarking less than \$2.5 billion, with

nearly \$1 billion of that coming from existing federal accounts.

Full House action was expected on Tuesday, as the aid was attached to a stopgap spending bill which would be sent to the President by Wednesday to avert a government shutdown on Thursday.

Rep. Vic Fazio, D-Calif., who led his state's effort in the committee, said the \$2.85 billion "does not, of course, meet all our needs." He said he was also concerned that the committee refused to waive requirements for local matching of some of the federal highway aid.

The committee votes came during a somewhat testy session, during which lawmakers from other states questioned why California's aid package should be so big.

Rep. Bob Livingston, R-La., proposed and then withdrew an amendment which would have allocated \$5 billion for his home state to compensate for the hurricane damage it has suffered in hurricanes since the turn of the century.

Rep. Ralph Regula, R-Ohio, said he was "troubled by the lack of accountability" in the California plan. Congress should "look at it a lot more carefully with hearings," he suggested.

"We are the Golden State and I think there is a certain amount of jealousy," Fazio said afterward.

The committee approved \$1.1 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's efforts to repair the devastation and \$1 billion for the Federal Highway Administration's emergency fund. Most of the fatalities, and the worst damage from the quake, was related to highway structures.

In addition, \$500 million would be given to the Small Business Administration for emergency loans, and \$250 million for President Bush to spend at his discretion on other operations.

The California delegation, Congress' largest at 47 members, had wanted \$1 billion for highway repair, \$1.1 billion for FEMA, \$1.2 billion for SBA disaster loans and \$100 million for loans to low-income people.

In Advance

Guatemalan presidential candidate speaks today

Father Andres Giron, 1990 presidential candidate for Guatemala, will speak at 7 p.m. in 201 MSC.

Giron leads the largest peasant union in Guatemala, numbering 100,000.

Giron has been seen as a threat to Guatemala's ultraconservative

leaders. His promise to seek land reform for the people has led some to call for his arrest.

He said he envisions a Guatemala with no landless peasants, a place where country people have enough land to grow the food they need.

Gubernatorial hopeful Hance to speak tonight

Kent Hance, Republican candidate for governor of Texas, will speak tonight at 7 in 105 Harrington.

Hance is one of four principal candidates vying for the Republican party nomination in the March primary.

Hance serves as chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission,

which regulates oil, gas and transportation industries in Texas.

The speech is sponsored by Texas A&M College Republicans and is open to the public.

During his brief stay in College Station, Hance also will speak to the Republican Club of Brazos County tonight at 6 at the Ramada Inn in College Station.

Groups plan Great Brazos County Trash Out II

Bryan and College Station will get the spic-and-span treatment Nov. 4 when area groups and businesses come together for the Great Brazos County Trash Out II.

The communitywide cleanup, sponsored by Brazos Beautiful, Bryan Forward! and the College Station Community Appearance Committee, will kick off with a presentation by the mayors and choirs from Bryan schools in the

Casa Tomas parking lot on Texas Avenue.

Each group will be assigned a specific portion of Texas Avenue or another appropriate area to clean up during the morning. Containers also will be placed in city parks to involve homeowners in the project.

Groups interested in participating may contact Diane Craig, executive coordinator at Brazos Beautiful, at 696-5391.

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Short at home study to evaluate individuals 17 years and older who have a temperature over 100° f. \$50. incentive for those chosen to participate. Nights and weekends call 361-1500.

\$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50 \$50

Cold Study

Individual 18 years & older who suffer from recent onset of the common cold. \$50 incentive for those chosen to participate.

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We are looking for these symptoms in individuals to participate in a short study to monitor and treat your illness. Free chest x-ray, EKG and monetary incentive for those chosen to participate.

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