

107 Years Claimed By Mexican Matriarch; Has 100 Grandchildren

Age has written indelible lines in the face and hands of Placida Martinez de Amarillas but it has neither dimmed her eyesight nor her evident enjoyment of a cigarette.

She and her many descendants—she has more than 100 grandchildren—claim she was born April 9, 1832. That puts her in her 107th year!

Accompanied by one of her granddaughters, Mrs. Rita M. Grijalva of the Pueblo, Senora Martinez was brought from her home in Redondo Beach this week to City Judge Robert Lessing's chambers last weekend to certify to a birth certificate for the local woman's new baby.

Drinks No Wine
Senora Martinez served as mid-wife at the time of her latest great-grandchild's arrival. She was born in Sonora, Mexico and well remembers, when she was a matron of 30 years, the entry of French troops into Mexico to seat Maximilian on the throne in 1862. She had 11 children, four of whom are still living. Mrs. Grijalva asserts that the matriarch has "three-four-five what you call great-great grandchildren."

Only a slight tremble in her hands betrayed Senora Martinez's evident great age. Although she likes a cigarette now and then, she has never used intoxicating liquor—not even a glass of wine, according to her vigorous negative shake of her mantilla-ed head.

Lives 'Good Life'
She came to this country from Mexico a half-century ago, Mrs. Grijalva told Judge Lessing. Asked for her recipe for longevity, Senora Martinez pierced her granddaughter with flashing dark eyes and unleashed a torrent of Spanish. Translated, she said "Doing what God wants you to do and living the good life."

Daily she putters about her small garden in Redondo Beach, where she lives with a 53-year-old granddaughter, and she can sew with the best of housewives, scoring glasses even to thread her needle. She eats anything, retires at sundown and is up at daybreak.

Alondra Relief Petitions Given Co. Committee

A sheaf of letters from affected property owners and petitions from approximately a dozen chambers of commerce and civic organizations asking that the board of supervisors proceed to ease the burden of debt upon property owners who are being assessed under Matson Act District No. 28 for Alondra park were forwarded to the county's special assessment relief committee this week by the board's chief clerk, Mrs. Alma Burks.

Among them was a letter from the Discount Corporation of America, owner of 200 lots in Tract 8293 in Zone A of the special assessment district for Alondra Park. The firm has paid in \$33,014 in taxes on this land in the past 10 years, and recently, when it attempted to sell part of its holdings, found the district had given the lots an uncertain value and secondly that no FHA loans could be obtained on the property.

Resolutions asking the county supervisors to aid the district were received from the Harbor District Chambers of Commerce, Gardena Valley, Torrance, San Pedro, Keystone, and Downey chambers.

Housing Project Bids Delayed; Recreation Facilities Outlined

Delay until June 27 has been ordered for opening bids for the \$2,500,000 housing project to be built by the Los Angeles County Housing Authority in North Long Beach, it was announced this week. Bids originally were slated to be opened today.

Designated as the Carmelitos project, the North Long Beach project, to consist of 607 dwelling units and a community building, will rise at Atlantic boulevard at the Union Pacific right of way, just outside the Long Beach city limits.

Bids for the next project, near Western avenue in the Palos Verdes Hills, are to be called for shortly, while plans for a third project in unincorporated territory are nearing completion for East Los Angeles. Objective of the projects is to provide standard living quarters for families

TORRANCE HERALD

25TH YEAR — NO. 24

SECTION A

TORRANCE, CALIF., THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 1939

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Meeting Called to Unify Drain Plans for Slough

In an effort to coordinate the work of various governmental and civic organizations in the movement to solve the drainage problem at Laguna Dominguez (Nigger Slough) a luncheon meeting has been called at Gardena on Thursday, June 22, it was reported this week by L. J. Gilmeister.

Supervisor Oscar Hauge, County Flood Control Engineer H. E. Hedger, and representatives of the California Historical Society, the cities of Torrance, Gardena and other municipalities have been invited to attend.

The Laguna Dominguez project is on the Congressional calendar, according to word received from Congressman Lee Geyer, who declared that he would follow it through until a solution was reached.

A movement to make the area a bird sanctuary and game refuge has been undertaken by the California Historical Society. Others want to dig an open drainage ditch, the county flood control engineer is reported to favor a cemented canal, while still others advocate a barge canal. In order to bring these various movements into harmony and to accomplish much needed relief to the often flooded area, the meeting has been called at Gardena next Thursday noon.

Tax Collections in County Said Back to Normal

Tax collections in Los Angeles County are back to normal for the first time in more than 10 years, according to figures issued this week by H. L. Byram, County Tax Collector. The percentage of delinquency this year is 5.73 percent, which is virtually normal and finds the county on, or about, the same tax basis as it was before the depression in 1929.

Tax collections in the city of Torrance were slightly better than the county-wide average, and the delinquency here was considerably lower than in other industrial cities in Los Angeles county.

Following is the percentage of tax delinquencies this year in various cities, as prepared by Gatzert Company, a Los Angeles bond house:

Municipality	% Delinquency
Torrance	5.70
Belmont	8.77
Compton	8.37
Gardena	11.03
Hawthorne	9.97
Hermosa Beach	7.48
Huntington Park	3.53
Inglewood	5.59
Long Beach	4.36
Maywood	7.21
Redondo Beach	6.83
South Gate	11.01

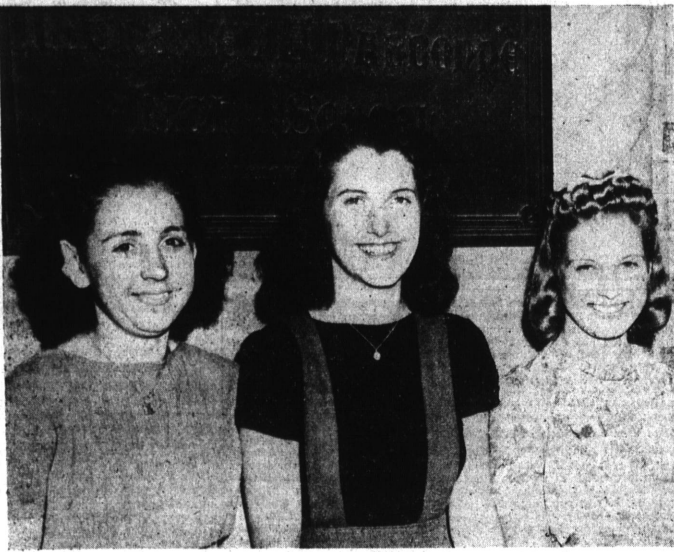
In the Alondra Park Assessment District (A&L 28) the tax delinquency jumped from 15.78 percent last year to 57.25 percent this year due to the tax strike. In 1936-37, the delinquency was 12.51 percent.

Brick Stack Falls, Starts Grass Fire

A grass fire which started Sunday when the wall of a brick stack at the Pacific Coast Brick company on Prairie avenue fell in, was extinguished without property damage. The wall fell apart and hot bricks ignited the fence and weeds, Torrance firemen said.

DOG TAX NEAR DUE

Collection of dog licenses in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles county for the fiscal year 1939-40 will begin July 1, according to the county tax collector.



LOMITA LASSIES IN RACE . . . Here are the three Narbonne high school girls who are competing with four from Torrance high for the right to rule as queen of the De Molay Fiesta and dance in the Civic Auditorium Saturday night, June 24. They are, left to right: Arlene Falk, Dolly Long and Jeanne Hathaway.

With seven popular Torrance and Narbonne high school girls conducting the advance ticket sale in competition for the role of queen at the festivities Saturday night, June 24, the De Molay Fiesta promises to be a stellar community attraction at the Civic Auditorium. The local contestants are Muriel Alverson, Ramona Carlin, Euphrasia Taylor and Norma Patterson. The Lomita entries are pictured above.

Coronation of the girl who sells the largest number of tickets will take place during the Fiesta. The duets may be secured from the girls or from members of the local De Molay chapter and Job's Daughters. Ticket chairmen are Dick Richie in Torrance, Bob Owens in Lomita.

There will be dancing, carnival features, many refreshment booths, games and prizes are to be awarded. All tickets bought before the Fiesta will be good at any of the booths, for dances and at the candy counters, according to Hans Sommer, master counselor and general manager of the affair.

Flag Day Paid Observance

Flag Day was more generally observed yesterday than at any time in the past here as three different programs were held to honor the national emblem and what it stands for. Three public gatherings, each well attended, were held. The first, at the high school assembly hall, featured an inspiring address by Dr. Francis D. Blakeslee, who once shook hands with Abraham Lincoln.

This program opened with the flag salute; a patriotic song by the school, choir and Miss Ada Chase, art instructor, exhibited a flag which had been in her family's possession for many years. It bore only 45 stars.

The second gathering was at the Methodist church where a new flag was dedicated and a native state rally was held. Rev. A. A. Heist was the speaker there. Later in the evening a community patriotic meeting was attended by nearly 350 people at the Civic Auditorium.

With Scott R. Ludlow presiding, the program opened with a professional of some 25 colors, carried by representatives of various organizations, and selections by the Municipal band. Ed Bire, manager of the State Unemployment office here, gave an instructive address on flag history and Mrs. Lorraine Ulrich sang the national anthem and "God Bless America."

Postmaster Earl Conner gave a talk on highway safety, Mayor William H. Tolson welcomed the gathering and urged a deeper appreciation of American ideals. David Babcock of the Sons of Legion led the pledge of all allegiance and a Lomita Boy Scout closed the meeting with the Scout Benediction.

STORE THEFTS

Two electric razors—one an expensive deluxe model—were stolen from the counter at George Moore's hardware store Monday, the owner reported to police.

R. R. Smith Returns to C. C. Presidency

For its 1939-40 president, the Torrance Chamber of Commerce this week re-elected its second leader and member of the first city council—R. R. "Dick" Smith, supervisor of employment at the National Supply company plant here.

He succeeds Alden W. Smith as head of the chamber with which he has been closely connected—serving for many years as a director—ever since he came to Torrance in 1912.

Other new officers of the local booster organization are: Dean Sears, first vice-president; Tom A. Mitchell, second vice-president; Sherwood McIntyre, treasurer, and L. J. Gilmeister was re-elected secretary-manager.

"It's too early and a bit too presumptuous for me to say what I hope to accomplish during the coming year," Smith said. "However, I would like to see if the chamber cannot arouse the interest of the whole community by a return to the 'public forum' plan of regular meetings. There are many things to do to help Torrance but we cannot accomplish much without the cooperation of all residents."

"I recall very vividly my first connection with the Torrance chamber. Before the city was incorporated, it was the duty of that organization to more or less govern the city—levy assessments for police and fire protection and do a number of things which now are the province of our city council."

"In those early years of the city the chamber had the support of most residents because it was a living thing to them. I hope this can be revived this year," Smith stated.

In addition to his service with the chamber, the new president (Continued on Page 4-A)

Funds Available for Western Ave. Improvement

Funds are now available for the widening and improvement of Western avenue between 108th street and Torrance boulevard. It was reported at the Harbor District Chamber of Commerce meeting last Thursday.

County officials were also reported to have available all necessary funds for the County's portion of the Western avenue extension between Torrance and San Pedro.

Chief obstacle to immediate extension of Western south of Torrance is the City of Los Angeles, which as yet has not appropriated funds for the purchase of right-of-way and paving in the area which lies within the L. A. Shoestring-Strip.

Premarital Health Test Becomes California Law

One of the most important bills signed this week by Governor Culbert L. Olson is a measure requiring a premarital syphilis test before marriage.

Under the bill, which was introduced by Senator Robert W. Kennedy, of Los Angeles county, and Senator Ed Fletcher, of San Diego county, all records are private. Anyone who misrepresents his identity or any facts on the certificate, or anyone who divulges the contents of any records, will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

The bill appropriates \$20,000 to the Department of Public Health for carrying out its provisions.

May Locate Scout Camp on Hollywood Riviera Park Site

A proposal to create a Boy Scout camp which would also be used by other Torrance youth groups in Hollywood Riviera was made by the District Boy Scout committee to the city council Tuesday night. Detailed plans of the project, together with an estimate that it would cost about

\$200 for necessary facilities, were submitted by Dr. R. A. Bingham.

After Clifford F. Reid, Hollywood Riviera subdivider, said he could "see no serious objection to the camp," Mayor William H. Tolson with the council's approval referred the matter to Councilman Jack Murray and the recreation department for a report at the next meeting. It was indicated that a committee would be formed of city officials, Scouters, other interested citizens and Reid to direct the camping program.

Site of the recreation area, which is 200 yards wide by about 300 yards long, is a small park bounded by Highway 101 and Vista del Parque. It has a natural boundary of a cedar hedge and a wood fence, is equipped with a water line and a shed. The Scouters estimated it would cost about \$200 to install necessary plumbing facilities, toilets, showers, outdoor drinking fountain and dish wash rack.

CITY FUNDS TAPPED FOR EQUIPMENT

Nine bids to supply the city with crushed rock and road oil for street improvement were opened by the city council Tuesday night. After an adjournment while City Engineer Leonard Young and City Attorney John E. McCall studied the quotations, the board received the Owl Truck Company's quotation of \$249.50 for 300 tons of rock and Paulson and Marks' offer of \$134 per barrel for 175 barrels of road oil.

Other expenditures approved by the council this week were: \$1,325 for a new street sweeper to replace one that the city obtained second-hand in 1912—a replacement hailed with joy by Street Superintendent William "Andy" Gascoigne.

For a 1939 Mercury auto, \$607.25, to replace a police department Ford sedan for which \$600 has been allowed as trade-in.

For janitors' supplies and equipment for the current year, \$350.

For completing the new police pistol range, \$300; this making a total of \$1,989 which the city has expended on this project.

For pre-mix asphalt, \$226.60; to be used in the paving of El Dorado from Anapola to Cota.

For 194 tons of crushed rock, \$303.21, for street repairs.

For repairs to broken curbs and sidewalks, \$151.20.

Two Streets Get New Names

Two street names were changed by resolutions adopted by the city council Tuesday night. Henceforth the 20-foot residential area known as "Spurlin Court" will be "Pacific Lane," a name not in existence elsewhere in the county. The Walteria street now bearing several names, such as Redondo-Wilmington boulevard, Ellis avenue, Newton avenue and California street, was re-christened "Newton street." Instead of bearing letters, Pacific Lane will have a system of street numbers as soon as residents put them up.

Mrs. Messner came to Torrance about a year ago to take over the fledgling toy loan library and through her indefatigable efforts and kindness to local children vastly increased the scope of the plaything center. A year ago the library had only 198 members and was circulating about 280 toys. A recent check-up showed 500 members and a circulation of 1,500 toys.

"Although I will be stationed in Los Angeles from now on, I intend to keep my promise of a picnic for my little friends here," she said. "I will return shortly to plan this outing so that none of the youngsters need be disappointed."

Mrs. Messner is succeeded here by Mrs. Ona Rails, who comes from Los Angeles to continue the toyarian duties.

Archbishop Will Dedicate New Catholic Church Here Sunday

A major event in the history of a church is its dedication. Next Sunday morning Archbishop John J. Cantwell of Los Angeles will come here to take a principal part in the ceremonies that will formally dedicate the new Catholic Church of the Nativity at Engracia and Manuel avenues.

Rev. Father Joseph P. Fitzgerald and members of his parish have made elaborate arrangements to welcome the Archbishop and his staff. The dedication of the \$20,000 Spanish Colonial structure will be celebrated during a solemn High Mass starting at 10 o'clock. Monsignor John McCarthy of St. Andrew's church in Pasadena will give the sermon.

Following the Mass, a reception will be held at Father Fitzgerald's parish house in honor of the Archbishop and at 12 o'clock noon there will be a public banquet at the Civic auditorium.

The new Catholic church, which has won many tributes for its architecture and severe liturgical furnishings, was started last September and the first Mass was held within its thick walls on March 6.

A large number of priests from surrounding parishes have been invited to attend the dedicatory Mass and banquet as have many residents of this city who are not members of the Catholic faith. Father Fitzgerald extends a cordial invitation to all to attend the service and the banquet.