

# FREE TEACHER IN WIFE'S DEATH

## Her Shooting Ruled Suicide

Police yesterday exonerated a Casimir Elementary School teacher of implication in the death of his wife in their Hermosa Beach home.

Carroll Harvey Becker, 34, who teaches the sixth grade at Casimir, had been held since Monday morning pending investigation into the circumstances of his wife's death. She died of a gunshot wound in the stomach.

Hermosa Beach police said yesterday that Mildred Grace Becker, 36, had apparently committed suicide. Becker denied any implication from the start and told officers that his wife had tried suicide a year ago with sleeping pills.

ROBERT MORTON, assistant superintendent for personnel in the Torrance Unified School District, said yesterday that Becker's exoneration was being noted officially by the school district.

"Since he was cleared, his professional status with the district remains as it always was," Morton said.

The teacher was apparently cleared after tests, including a paraffin test, were concluded by investigators.

HE TOLD POLICE after the shooting that he and his wife had had a "spat" Sunday about the time he spent away from home on school affairs.

He said he had retired Sunday evening and was awakened about 10:30 by the noise of the shot. He found his wife lying in the kitchen of the Hermosa Beach home, a pearl-handled, 22-caliber pistol lying beside her. She was pronounced dead on arrival at Harbor General Hospital.

## Jaycees Plan Discussion On Libraries

William J. Hanson and Mrs. Carline Humphries, members of the city library commission, will speak on "Torrance Libraries, Present and Future" at the regular dinner meeting of the Junior Chamber of Commerce tonight.

Bob Monroe is program chairman for the evening.

## Jacob Koch to Be Honored By Rotarians

President Jack Schmidt of the Torrance Rotary Club announced that 75 local Rotarians will join with nearly 365,000 Rotarians in 110 countries and geographical regions this week for a special observance of "The Rotary Foundation Week."

Local Rotarians will highlight this observance next Wednesday in the Palms restaurant with a presentation of a plaque to Jacob G. Koch who is the honorary member of the Torrance club. "Jack" Koch is distinguished as one of the outstanding supporters in the United States to Rotary Foundation.

The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International seeks to promote understanding and friendly relations between the peoples of different nations. Its major activity is granting Rotary Foundation fellowships for advanced study to outstanding graduate students for one academic year of study abroad as Rotary ambassadors of good will.

Since 1947, when the program was established, 1078 young men and women from 65 countries have received Rotary Foundation fellowships for study in 48 countries, with grants averaging over \$2500. Total grants by the Rotary Foundation for this activity now exceed \$2,700,000. The Rotary Foundation fellowship program received great impetus through thousands of contributions made in memory of Paul P. Harris, the founder of Rotary, who died in 1947.

CYCLIST INJURED  
Nine-year-old Charles Noel, of 2298 Del Amo Blvd., was treated for cuts and bruises at Harbor General Hospital after he was struck by an auto near Crenshaw and Del Amo.

## A Penny for your Thoughts

As November brings foot ball into the back stretch your HERALD photographer asked two students from each of the "Area Torrance" high schools this question: "Do you think your high school will win top honors in their league this year and who is your favorite player on your team?"

Vic Masaki, Torrance high school:

"We can win the Bay League only if Santa Monica is beat and we win all of the rest of our games. Then we will be tied for first place. Manfred Mainer is my pick."

Christie Percy, Torrance high school:

"We can't win the Bay League championship unless Santa Monica loses a game. I think Inglewood might be just the team to beat them and then we will play off the tie. I pick Ken Peric as my favorite."

Paul Westler, North high school:

"I think we will win the Pioneer League title as we have had three years to build the team we now have them the team is out to set a record and this should do it. I like Charles Bertone."

Sharon Schriber, North high school:

"I think we will win as we have a good team. In fact the best in our Pioneer League and the best in town. We have great school spirit and wonderful coaches. I think Charles Bertone is terrific."

Ken Tolley, South high school:

"Our team is really on the ball and should win. We have good spirit and the whole school is behind the team. If I have to pick a single player it will have to be Lou Austin."

Sharon Erickson, South high school:

"I think we have the best team in the Crenshaw League and as I believe they should win, or at least be up there at the top. I think our coaches are wonderful and that Bill Rosegrove is wonderful too."

RADIO STOLEY  
A thief who entered his garage while the family was away with a radio receiver valued at \$244 Monday Rex Sabina of

## Divers Locate Flyers' Bodies

An oil slick in the ocean waters off Torrance bluff led six sea divers early Tuesday morning to the bodies of two Hawthorne men who crashed in a light plane Monday night.

Recovering the crash victims, Pilot Donald F. Volkman, 26, father of five, and Virgil F. Overlease, 23, whose bodies were still belted to the seats of the shattered Cessna 140, were lifeguards Lt. Jack Wise and John Kunkle of the county diving recovery team.

Witnesses of the crash, which occurred just eight minutes after the single-engine plane took off from Hawthorne airport Monday night, saw the craft plummet into the murky depths after apparently turning over in mid-air.

The accident was reported at 8:15 p.m. Monday by Mrs. John Robb, 115 Via Riviera. Rescue operations were conducted in vain until midnight, when darkness forced them to quit.

EARLY TUESDAY morning Sheriff's Deputy Roland Barton spotted the oil slick from his helicopter which led to the recovery of the bodies.

The victims' bodies were identified by their addresses. Mrs. Doris Volkman, 27, mother of five children, and Mrs. Norma Overlease, mother of a two-year-old, at the White and Day Mortuary.

Volkman, who was employed as a tool cutter and grinder for Technical Products in Hollywood, flew in his spare time for the Triple 120 flying club, where he worked as a mechanic.

A machinist at Douglas Aircraft, Overlease also worked as a mechanic for the flying club.

## Crane Held on Murder Charge

Kenneth R. Crane, 30-year-old murder suspect, of 22910 Cabrillo Ave., will be defended by a public attorney at a preliminary hearing set for Nov. 14. Crane is charged with the Halloween night shooting of his 27-year-old wife, Joan.

Crane was represented by George E. Shibley, attorney for the longshoreman's union, at his arraignment before South Bay Municipal Judge Donald Armstrong Tuesday. At the request of Crane's stepfather, Shibley asked that a public defender be assigned by the court to replace him.

THE ALLEGED murder took place last Friday night during an argument over money and housekeeping habits of the dead woman in a struggle for possession of a 16-gauge shotgun, the weapon discharged hitting the victim in the chest. Upon arrival at Harbor General Hospital, Mrs. Crane was pronounced dead.

The couple's three children—Steven, 5, and Terry, 9—had been trick or treating with neighborhood youngsters. At the time of the killing, Michael, 11, was at the home of his grandparents and the two other children were asleep. Terry was awakened by the shotgun blast.



TARTAR QUEEN HOPEFULS  
Fourteen of the top queen candidates at Torrance High School sat together for a luncheon before the final voting. As conducted yesterday, the winner will be announced tomorrow. Shown here from the left are Gerry Day, Carol Barber,



WHERE THERE'S SMOKE... Watching the efforts to control a fire which broke out in the city dump Sunday, are three of the hundreds of persons who were attracted to the area by the billowing black smoke. The fire was confined to the dump area, officials reported. Cause was probably spontaneous. (Herald Photo)

## Torrance Adds Its Voice To Democratic Landslide

Torrance went right, along with the rest of California — by a large majority although it will probably be less than 2 to 1. Congressman King, challenging in his bid for re-election to Congress, was defeated in the Torrance precincts yesterday afternoon.

A sampling of Torrance precincts after Tuesday's balloting indicated that Pat Brown was carrying this city by a handsome margin; that Clair Engle was leading Gov. Knight for the Senate race; Cecil King was receiving light opposition in his bid for re-election to Congress; and that the voters were strong in the opposition to the three controversial propositions — 16, 17, and 18.

Based also on the sampling, more than 20,000 of the city's voters were at the polls sometime Tuesday. It was one of the greatest "off-year" elections in California's history.

TORRANCE VOTERS repudiated the controversial Proposition 16 by a margin of about 2 to 1, and showed under Proposition 17 Proposition 18, the so-called "right to work" amendment was beaten here

The Civic Symphony will open the 1958-59 season with a concert on Nov. 12 at Aviation High School auditorium. Schools will be the eminent baritone, Lyle Beck, who was soloist with the Roger Wagner Chorus on their 1957 tour, and who has been the featured artist of a number of operas and religious programs in this area.

The orchestra under the direction of Elise Aehle will play the magnificent "Jephter" symphony by Mozart and the "Romeo and Juliet" fantasy of Tchaikovsky.

On Sunday afternoon, Nov. 9, from 4 to 6, Judge and Mrs. John A. Shidler and the symphony band are entertaining with a pre-concert tea at the Shidler home in Hollywood Hills.

Several young artists will be heard on this occasion, among them are Robert Brooks, pupil of Collette Nance, Anthony Lopera, pupil of Dr. Kaves, and

## Schools to Be Closed on Veteran's Day

Veterans' Day, Tuesday, Nov. 11, will be a holiday for students and employees of the Torrance Unified School District.

All schools and offices will be closed on that day. Also scheduled as holidays this month are Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, when youngsters and employees will eat turkey.

Christmas vacation in Torrance is scheduled from Dec. 22 through Jan. 2.

## TEA, FIRST CONCERT PLANNED BY SYMPHONY

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PROMOTED... Billy C. Sauercker (left) was promoted from captain to battalion chief and Wesley L. Christie was promoted to fire captain effective Nov. 1. Fire Chief J. J. Renner announced this week. (Herald Photo)

## Woman Sought in \$50,000 Shortage Takes Life in Motel

A former bookkeeper for a Torrance lumber firm, suspected of a \$50,000 embezzlement, ended her life Monday in an Oklahoma motel.

Mrs. Agnes Marie O'Brien, 34, died of an overdose of sleeping pills just hours before the arrival of her former employer, W. E. Upton, president of the independent business

gator, who was armed with a warrant for her arrest issued by the District Attorney's office here.

A suicide note commenting on "the mess I've made of my life" and signed "Christie" was found by her bed, according to news reports from Oklahoma.