

Police Quiz Man on Kidnap Claim

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Torrance Herald

School Funds
Are Essential
(See Editorial, Page 14)

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OPINIONS ON LIE-TEST DIFFER

A Penny for your Thoughts

There's a move on again to lower the voting age in California to 18, so the Pennies photographer asked five local people, "What do you think about the voting age being lowered?"

Ted Witovich, 1775 Marinette St.

"I don't see any particular reason why the voting age should be lowered to 18. I think this depends on the individual. Some people, no doubt, will be intelligent enough to make a decision at 18, but I think the age limit is correct now."



Chris Kanatsky, 1023 Acacia St.

"I think it should stay like it is because people at 18 do not follow the ideas of the candidates they have to vote for, so they do not know who is the best candidate. There are some people, in college, who are more mature at 18, but there aren't that many."

William Kanatsky, 1023 Acacia St.

"I believe that if people are properly schooled in political science and are mature enough in what they are voting for, they could make the same vote as they could at 21."

Craig Baxley, 4038 W. 175th Place

"I really think the age should be lowered to 18. Almost everybody is out of high school by the time they are 18, and most of the 18-year-olds would be mature enough and have enough education to be able to vote intelligently."

Mrs. Elmer Vandergriff, 18338 Yukon Ave.

"I think it should be lowered. If young people are old enough at 18 to fight for their county, then they are old enough to make a decision in an election. If they are high school graduates, their education is more current than many people's interest."

Woman Calls Ex-Torrance Man Abductor

A former Torrance resident was being held by Los Angeles police yesterday after an Arizona housewife told police he had held her captive for seven days. Mrs. Velma Jo Musil, 19, of Phoenix, said she managed to escape long enough to tell a Torrance physician of her plight, according to Harbor Division detectives. The police said the doctor directed them to the suspect.

Strip Area Population Is 11,300

Estimated population of the City of Los Angeles strip east of Torrance is now 11,300, according to statistics compiled by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission.

In its quarterly report on the population of Los Angeles, the commission said there are 3,760 dwelling units in the strip area, 3,296 of which were occupied on Oct. 1, 1963.

The estimate shows an increase of nearly 1,500 persons since the 1960 census. Elementary school enrollment in the area has dropped from 1,407 in 1960 to 1,209 this year, despite an increase of 660 dwelling units in the area.

Total population of the City of Los Angeles was estimated at 2,646,600.

Lomita Acreage Improvement Set

A new subdivision located north of Lomita Blvd. and west of Walnut in Lomita, has been approved by the regional planning commission. Richard Mertz 2320 Pacific Coast Hwy., will develop 13 single family residence lots on the two acre parcel.

The suspect, Fred Robert Smith, 51, was arrested Monday evening at a motel at 1629 W. Pacific Coast Hwy. He was booked on accusations of kidnaping and investigation of criminal assault and child molestation after a lie detector test.

Police said he insisted Mrs. Musil was "after my money." Officers also said Smith had two daughters, ages 7 and 4, by a former marriage and a little more than \$21,000 in cash in his room at the motel when they arrested him.

Mrs. Musil alleges Smith kidnaped her in Phoenix after luring her into a camper to see gifts he had purchased for his children. She says he handcuffed and gagged her, and allegedly assaulted her in front of the two small children.

The woman says she babysat for Smith in El Cajon and went with the family to Las Vegas when Smith moved there in November. Her husband and her father found her in Las Vegas and returned her to Phoenix, where the alleged kidnaping is said to have taken place.

She told officers she managed to leave Smith standing in a doctor's waiting room Monday after going there for removal of a cyst.

Detectives said Smith may be released to federal custody for prosecution under federal statutes.



NEW VOTER . . . Larry Coil, who has just turned 21 and, therefore, eligible to vote, registers with Deputy City Clerk Marjorie Moss while his father, City Clerk Vernon P. Coil, looks on at the right. Larry will be eligible to vote in the municipal elections on April 14, as will all other voters who register no later than Feb. 20. City Clerk Coil yesterday urged all prospective voters to check their registration status. The coming year will be a busy one at the polls. (Herald Photo)

The Override Tax

School Future Rides On Special Election

(Note: This is the first of several articles which The HERALD will publish on the forthcoming Special Tax

Election called by the Torrance Unified School District. The series will examine the reasons behind the override election to uncover the whys and hows of problems faced by the local schools today.)

By JERRY REYNOLDS
Herald Staff Writer

Taxpayers in this city face a decision come Feb. 4—a decision that will have a substantial effect on the future of the Torrance Unified School District.

District officials, faced with rising costs and a 50-cent override tax which will expire at the end of the current fiscal year, are asking the taxpayers to approve a 90-cent override tax for a term of five years. While the measure appears on the ballot as a 90-cent hike, it represents a boost of only 40 cents over the current general purpose expenditures tax rate.

The current tax rate for Torrance is \$2.90 for each \$100 of assessed valuation, but an override approved in 1960 will expire June 30 and the rate will automatically drop to \$2.40 per \$100 unless the Feb. 4 measure is approved. Approval of the tax hike will mean a rate of \$3.30 per \$100 next year for the general purpose tax.

PROPERTY owners actually paid a tax rate of \$4.125 per \$100 this year, but that total includes \$1.2125 for bond retirement, social security, employe retirement, and community and county services taxes, all of which are fixed by law and cannot be changed by the voters or the local Board of Education. The general purpose taxes are used to finance current operating expenses in the district.

Some officials, fearful of a property owners' revolt against the increased costs of education, have launched a campaign to garner support of other school boards to amend the California constitution to require the State Legislature to furnish a minimum of 50 percent of current expenditures. Another provision would require the Legislature to provide funds for new programs which are required by new laws.

Such a move, however, will (Continued on Page 2)

Councilmen Urge 'Full Cooperation'

Can police officers be ordered to take lie detector tests in the course of investigations into affairs of the city? "I feel it is unconstitutional and an encroachment on one's own personal, human, and civil rights," City Manager Wade Peebles wrote last week in a memorandum to police department employes, saying he would not "subject any persons, by order, to take a polygraph (lie detector) test."

Police officers can be ordered to take such tests, and several leading cases in California back up the issue, according to an opinion handed to members of the City Council by City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier Tuesday night.

REMELEMEYER'S opinion drawn up at the request of City Manager Peebles, cited several California cases in which police officers were removed from office for refusing to submit to such tests and the courts upheld the dismissal.

Opinion on the City Council appeared sharply divided with Councilman Ross A. Sciarrotta Jr. stating emphatically that officers should be ordered to appear for such tests when requested.

Councilmen Nick Drale, J. A. Beasley and Ross A. Sciarrotta Jr., seeking to get the matter straightened out, asked representatives of the attorney general's office and the district attorney's office to explain the situation to members of the City Council. A meeting was set up in the city hall for 6:30 last evening to hear the state and county officials.

The storm over the lie-tests broke last week when investigators for the attorney general's office requested that two police lieutenants appear Friday to go over testimony previously given under polygraph.

CITY MANAGER Peebles issued the memo Thursday saying he would not order the officers to appear, and charges (Continued on Page 2)

Building Last Year Sets Mark

December, a traditionally light month in the construction industry, brought the city more than \$5 million in new construction and pushed final 1963 totals to \$58.7 million, a record high for the city.

Building Department permits totaling \$5,391,260 were issued here, the bulk of which were for construction of apartment units. A total of 12 permits, valued at \$3.6 million, were issued for construction of 327 apartment units. A total of 15 new single-family homes were started.

Activity in the city surpassed the previous all-time high in October. Final valuation of all new construction begun in the city since Jan. 1, 1963, was \$58,720,563, surpassing the 1956 record by more than \$12 million.

LARGEST OF the permits issued in December went to the Ocean View Development Co. The firm will build an 82-unit condominium development at Van Ness Avenue and 182nd Street. The building permit was valued at \$1,266,740.

A permit listed at \$574,820 was issued to Donald G. Hunt for a 106-unit motel. Several permits for apartment units were valued in excess of \$250,000.

When all construction started in 1963 is completed, the city will have gained a total of 713 single-family homes and 2,900 apartment units.

A total of 224 permits were (Continued on Page 2)

LEE HALEY NOW WEARS NEWSPAPERBOY CROWN

Lee Haley Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Haley of 5553 Emerald St., wears the crown of distinction as the Torrance Herald's carrier of the month for December, 1963.

Lee, selected from among the Herald's more than 170 carrier boys, "fits like a glove into our newspaperboy program." Circulation Manager Darrell Westcott said.

Prompt, regular delivery service coupled with a pleasing personality in his customer relationships have made Lee a very popular young businessman in his neighborhood, Westcott said.

"He has the drive to get ahead . . . to build a successful business," the circulation manager said.

Lee's favorite hobby is the operation of model airplanes, which he also likes to build. He has had two years experience in the Pop Warner football program, and is "pretty handy" with a baseball.



LEE HALEY



MORE DEVELOPMENT DUE . . . Development of parking for 340 cars at Torrance Beach estimated to cost more than \$78,000 has been called for in bids due Feb. 5 in the offices of the County Engineer. Authority for the bid call was voted Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors. The new parking will be in addition to the 110 stalls now available and will be located between the present lot and Paseo de la Concha on the ocean side of Paseo de la Playa. (Herald Photo)

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