



TORRANCE PRESS

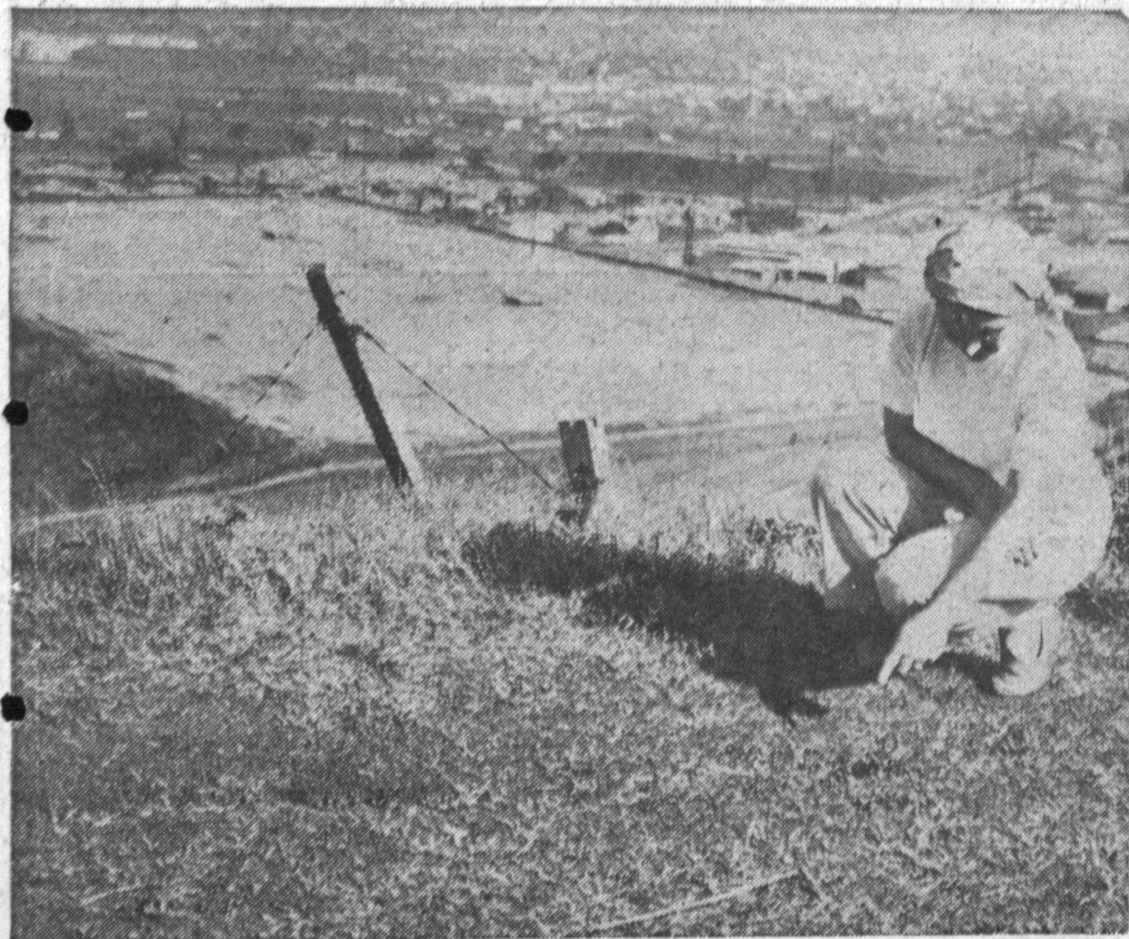
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SLIDING OFF—Mrs. William Johnson shows where her backyard is slipping off steep embankment on Portobello Drive. There are only approximately 10 feet between her house and the precipice, and she said she has been told that the house will slide down the hill in from two to five years. The city this week appropriated money to construct a drain which will carry off underground water, which appears to be causing erosion. At bottom of hill is city water reservoir. —Press Photo

City Drain Action Praised by Owner of Slide House

The city's approval of a drain for the Victoria Knolls area was hailed as a "step in the right direction" by a resident whose house is threatened with sliding down the hill.

Mrs. William W. Johnson of 2749 Portobello Drive said that she had been told by engineers that her home will slip down a sharp embankment in from two to five years unless corrective action is taken.

Sharp cracks have appeared in the foundation and the house since just before Easter last year.

The cracks have widened considerably since that time and other surrounding homes have received minor damage from what has been described as underground water seepage.

Mrs. Johnson, wife of a service station owner, said that their fire insurance was cancelled two weeks ago on grounds that the house "isn't a good risk."

Residents of the area were finally successful last Tuesday in receiving help from the city, when the City Council approved construction of a \$10,000 drain to carry the water of the hillside, where it has caused erosion.

At the same time, councilmen ordered that a test suit be filed to determine if the city can legally spend the money to aid the residents of Victoria Knolls.

Councilmen were worried that by spending the money they might assume liability for the

damage. Both City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier and a special counsel ruled that the city is not responsible for the damage. But several councilmen said they felt a moral obligation to assist the residents, and also to protect a municipal water reservoir which could be damaged in a land slide.

Policemen Sign as Members of Women's Group

All 91 members of the Torrance Police Association, nearly all of them men, are the newest members of the YWCA, which is primarily a women's organization.

They all signed up Thursday to show their support and handed over a check for \$200 for a year's dues.

YWCA officials said that men can join as associate members and participate in some of the activities such as bridge lessons and social dancing.

City in Red Over Rubbish

Torrance went \$159,563 in the red in administering its municipal rubbish collection program during 1958.

Total cost of the program was \$499,480, while the city collected only \$339,917, City Manager George Stevens estimated.

That meant that it cost the city \$1.50 per household to pick up the trash, while the home owner was charged \$1.

The report points out that cost rose during the last six months of the year, partially because of salary increases and dump operation was suspended for the public, causing loss of revenue.

The survey also points to a need for reviewing the high cost of equipment maintenance.

Thief Suspect Nabbed

The first day that supermarkets reopened, the manager of the Fox Market, 1321 Post Ave., apprehended a shoplifting suspect.

Andrew Calvin Wade, 68, of 711 Amapola St., was given a five-day suspended sentence after he allegedly attempted to steal lunch meat and sausages from the store.

New Dope Arrests Net Torrance Pair

Two THS Students Arrested

Two Torrance High School students, one a girl, were arrested by Los Angeles police narcotics officers in a mushrooming drive which has landed 54 suspects in custody over the past two weeks.

Both students were arrested in their homes Friday, according to Sgt. Griffin McKay, in charge of the roundup of teenage narcotics suspects.

The Torrance students were charged with use of marijuana.

It was the first time that a Torrance High School student was involved in the mass arrests, which have resulted in the jailing of 54 juveniles and adults so far.

Most of the students attend Narbonne, Gardena and Banning high schools.

McKay said that no students of North or South High Schools have been involved but said that several more Torrance youths are expected to be picked up as the investigation continues.

Grandmother, Tots Injured in Car-Truck Collision

A grandmother and two small children were injured in a collision between their car and a gravel truck at Artesia Blvd. and Vermont Ave. Wednesday afternoon.

Treated at Harbor General Hospital were Mrs. Jane L. Farges, 46, of El Segundo, and Douglas Lackey, 4, and his sister, Sheryl, 2, both of 20419 S. Vermont Ave. Following the collision, the truck, driven by Dale Ray Terrell, landed on top of the car trunk, crushing it, investigators said.

HOUSE FIRE LOSS

Fire of undetermined origin caused approximately \$100 damage to the home of E. H. Evans, 1928 Reynosa Dr. Wednesday evening, firemen reported.

Lower Car Sales Cut Into City's Income

Last year's recession-caused slump in automobile sales will cut into city revenues to the tune of about \$25,000, City Manager George Stevens told the City Council Tuesday.

He made the statement after Mayor Albert Isen asked that a "windfall" rebate of \$16,000 from employees' insurance, received because of a good safety program, be used for park improvements.

Jerome I. Scharfman, city finance director, said that indications are state-wide that motor vehicle registration receipts will be considerably lower this year, because the cars on the road are older.

Reduction in new car sales last year and during the latter part of 1957 is attributed as cause for the cut in revenue.

"The fees depend on the age of the cars. As a car becomes older, its registration fee goes down. Apparently there are more older cars on the road today," Scharfman said.

But gasoline tax receipts will remain about the same, he predicted.

Cheating in Rubbish Exemptions Charged

Allegation that some residents apparently "cheated" in claiming rubbish collection fee exemptions was made this week by Jerome I. Scharfman, director of finance.

He said that he will ask the City Council Tuesday to set a definite policy in granting exemptions and put it in ordinance form.

"We've had people swear they used the city dump six months after the dump was closed to the public," Scharfman said.

Dismisses Cases

He also announced that Municipal Judge Donald Armstrong dismissed a batch of small claims actions filed by the city to collect delinquent bills because the city did not have an ordinance clause providing for exemptions under certain conditions.

Informally the City Council has provided that residents who sign an affidavit that they do not use the municipal pickup will not have to pay the monthly \$1 charge.

They may claim an exemption if they haul their own rubbish, have an unoccupied dwelling for any length of time or have some other reason.

Won Judgments

Scharfman said that the city won judgments against about 25 residents who had been delinquent in their rubbish bills for a year.

But in later cases, Judge Armstrong ruled in favor of the defendants on grounds that the city allows exemptions, but does not specify this in the present ordinance, Scharfman said.

He pointed out that he had not tried to collect the judgments against the first defendants until the ordinance is amended.

Originally the city intended to file small claims actions against approximately 400 householders who did not pay their bills since the inception of municipal service more than a year ago.

Singer's Home Looted of More Than \$1000 Haul

Singer Johnny Prophet sang a sad tune to police Friday when he reported that his home had been looted of more than \$1000 in cash, clothing and jewelry.

A burglar entered his house at 4808 Carson St. while the vocalist was visiting in Woodland Hills by slashing a window screen.

He got away with \$375 in cash, four suits and a white dinner jacket valued at \$725, and two watches valued at \$175, the victim told police.

Hahn Blasts Victoria Park Gambling Plan

Incorporation of tiny Victoria Park as a gambling city was denounced today by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn as "tragic."

The county official joined members of the Victoria Park Civic Council, which is opposing the proposed incorporation of the 1.2-square-mile area northeast of Torrance.

Joseph Asaro, who describes himself as a retired steelworker, two weeks ago submitted petitions to incorporate the area west of Avalon Blvd. and south of Victoria St. He announced that a Gardens-style card club to produce revenue would be agreeable to him.

Hits Gambling

"It would be tragic if the incorporation were to be carried through with the people becoming dependent upon gambling

palaces as a source of municipal revenue," Hahn declared.

"As a student of government, I am convinced that no community should incorporate and assume all the responsibilities and functions of municipal government unless it is a properly balanced community, with adequate area, population, business and industry."

Smallest City

"If Victoria Park were to be incorporated, it would be the smallest city in area in the county and one of the smallest in population. It is primarily a residential community and does not have sufficient business and industry to stand on its own without imposing an intolerable tax load on the small home owner," he asserted.

Gordon T. Nesvig, clerk to the Board of Supervisors, said that a report on the sufficiency of signatures on the incorporation petitions will probably be announced Tuesday.

If enough signatures have been obtained, a hearing will be set in about two months.

Board to Check Candidates

A qualification board to check on the eligibility of candidates for city offices will be recommended to the City Council Tuesday.

City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier suggested that such a board, to be composed of himself, City Clerk A. H. Bartlett and Police Chief Percy Bennett, be created.

Candidates would be asked to sign an affidavit and the statements would be checked by the board.

The recommendation was made to eliminate the future possibility of unqualified candidates being listed on the ballot.

This happened during last year's municipal election, when Barney Miller, a candidate for city clerk, was found ineligible because of residential requirements. Although he withdrew from the race, his name was still listed on the ballot.

Four Injured in Auto Accidents

Four persons were injured in two accidents Friday.

Gary Dean Cope, 20, of 2005 West 240th St., and a passenger, Rosemarie Gill, 16, of 908 Patronella St., were taken to Pacific Medical Center after their car overturned on Crenshaw Blvd. at the Nike base, police said.

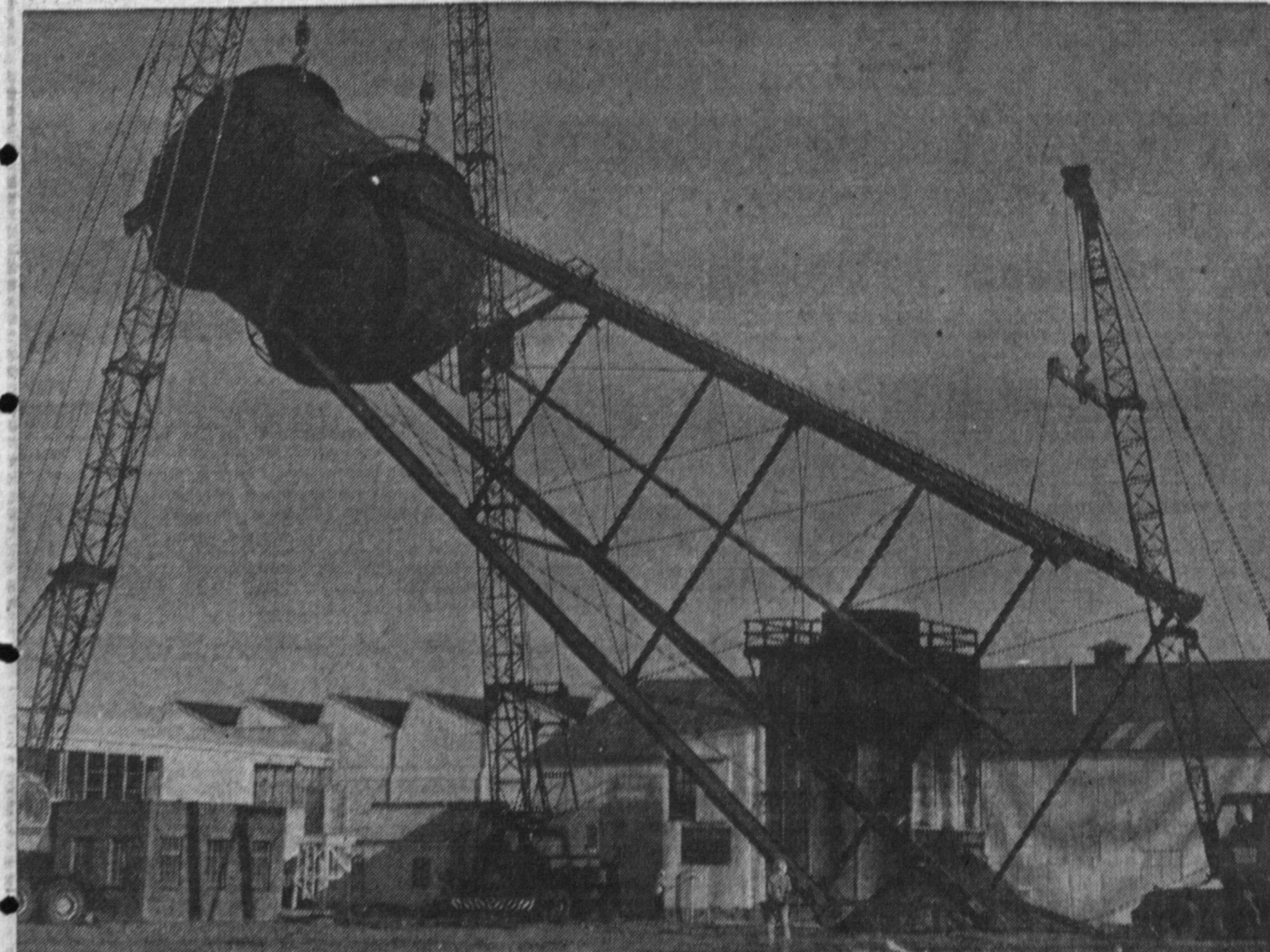
Two Palos Verdes Estates youths were injured in an auto accident on Henrietta St., north of Torrance Blvd. The pair, John Gregerson, 16, and Bob Sponheim, 15, were passengers in the car driven by Ronald E. Moore, 16, of Palos Verdes, officers said.

STEAL WASH BASIN

A thief walked off with a wash basin from a home at 25042 Eshelman Ave., Dan E. Butcher reported to deputy sheriff.

STEAL GUN

A pellet gun and \$2 were stolen from the Green Thumb Gardens at 20617 Hawthorne Blvd., owner Akira Matsumoto told police Friday.



LEANING TOWER OF TORRANCE—In order to repair and bring it up to earthquake-proof specifications, the 110-foot-high water tower at the Electronics Division of Ryan Aeronautical Co. had to be tilted down and set on its side recently.

Photo shows three cranes pulling the elevated tank, a 30-year-old landmark, being lowered. When completed, the tank, used as an auxiliary water supply in case of fire, will have the firm's name on both sides and will be illuminated at night.



FIRST STRIKE—Mayor Albert Isen gets set to roll first ball down the lane of Palos Verdes Bowl, which held its formal opening Thursday. Assisting the mayor is Diane Downey, hostess, while owners Jack Howard and Harry Sternfeld look on. Story on page two.

Probe of 'Error' Started

City Manager George Stevens this week began an investigation of complaints that the newly completed Hollywood Riviera storm drain does not work properly.

He admitted that the flood control project would have functioned better if it had been installed at a lower elevation.

The drain was engineered by Torrance and also approved by the Redondo Beach city engineering department.

Several residents of the area near Paseo de la Playa and Calle Miramar voiced complaints to the Redondo Beach City Council Monday that the drain did not work and that flood waters during the January rain storm inundated their garages.

Seek Correction

They charged that the flood waters would have to reach a depth of four feet before the drain would carry them off.

The Redondo Beach City Council instructed its acting city manager, Joe Leach, to contact Torrance officials to correct the situation and extend the drain to carry off the water at an estimated cost of \$20,000.

Councilman Robert Jahn two weeks ago demanded that he be notified if there had been any errors in the design or construction of the \$27,000 drain, and demanded to get the names of the persons involved, if an error was made.

Mutual Project

Both Torrance and Redondo Beach appropriated funds for the drainage project, with Torrance paying the major share.

Some of the pavement will have to be torn up if the drain has to be lowered, city officials said.

"It appears there is something wrong, and it makes me mad," declared Mayor Leroy L. Center of Redondo Beach.

Stevens said he will make a complete investigation and report to the City Council.

Van Bellehem's Father Dies

Englebert Van Bellehem, 77, father of Harry B. Van Bellehem, director of the Recreation Department, died suddenly Friday in a Los Angeles rest home.

A native of Holland, the elder Van Bellehem came to Southern California in 1928 and had resided in Torrance 15 years until he moved to Escondido.

He had been a machinist for 20 years for the Ideco Co. of Torrance.

Besides his son Harry, he is survived by another son, James, of Charleston, Ill., a daughter, Mrs. Lorna Meares of Manhattan Beach, and seven grandchildren.

Services are pending at the White and Day Mortuary, Manhattan Beach.

Deadline Nears for Auto Tags

Wednesday will mark the deadline for renewing motor vehicle licenses for 1959.

The white tags issued this year will be issued at the Torrance office of the Department of Motor Vehicles, 1907 Border Ave., or at auto clubs and banks.

After the deadline, penalties will be imposed.