

Saigon Bomb Survivor Visits Family Here

A career diplomat will leave Torrance today for Washington, D.C., following an Easter reunion with his family some 6,000 miles from his war torn post.

Samuel Thomsen, U. S. Consul in Hue, Viet Nam, will consult officials in Washington, then return here for a two-months stay with his wife and two small children. He expects to return to his diplomatic post about July 1.

Thomsen, who has spent the past two years in Viet Nam, returned to the United States on home leave after being injured in the bomb blast which rocked the U. S.

embassy in Saigon, Viet Nam some three weeks ago, leaving several persons dead.

Leaving his post in Hue, on the northern frontier of South Viet Nam, Thomsen had gone to Saigon for consultation with U. S. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor and other members of the embassy staff. He was at work in the political section on the embassy's third floor when the bomb exploded.

Thomsen was among the less seriously injured in the blast, although a mix-up in addresses and an erroneous report of his death left his family in doubt for a brief

time. It was not until his father-in-law, Don Wolf, called the State Department that the family learned Thomsen was alive and recovering.

The young diplomat reconstructed the events of that day for the Press-Herald this week.

Working on papers in the political section, Thomsen said he did not leave his work when he heard shots about 11 a.m. A secretary working in the same room did, however, go to a window to see what was going on, while other embassy officials began investigating the shots.

"I went to the window to

suggest she not stand there," Thomsen said. He saw a father cowering in the gutter trying to protect a 3- or 4-year-old boy" across from the embassy building.

Thomsen moved away from the window and headed for an inner room which he said was protected. "There was no clear conscious decision," he said, "I just felt something was going on. I started to leave." He was "one step away" from the inner room when the bomb exploded.

Thomsen was cut about the eyes and scalp by flying glass. He was bleeding, but did not lose consciousness.

Picking himself off the floor, Thomsen headed toward the other side of the building where a friend assisted him to the ground floor.

Severe damage to the building occurred on the ground floor and Thomsen recalls seeing several persons lying about the area, many of them badly hurt or dead. The friend returned to the second floor to assist where he could and Thomsen helped outside by the secretary he had warned earlier — was given a ride to the Saigon Navy Hospital in an Army jeep.

"I was one of the first to

reach the hospital," he said. Thomsen remained in the hospital for two days and then returned to the embassy. The following Sunday, he returned to work in Hue.

Thomsen told the Press-Herald he had intended to leave Saigon the day of the explosion, but decided to stay because "things were going well."

"I was doing some things which I wanted to complete," he said, "I never did get them done."

How does he feel about going back to Viet Nam? "There's a job to be done,"

he says. Thomsen admits he is uneasy about the return trip — "There's a war going on."

Thomsen has high praise for the Vietnamese people who have been fighting for so long. He says they are "dedicated, courageous, and anti-communists."

The struggle won't be easy, he says, but it can be won. It will require a lot of patience and dedication. "Given continued American support," says Thomsen, "the Vietnamese people will win. And they are grateful for American support."

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Extra Money Requested For Peninsula College

Chapel Submits Bill to Grant More Site Funds

A bill which would make additional money available to purchase a college site on the Palos Verdes Peninsula was submitted to the Legislature Friday by Assemblyman Charles Edward Chapel, a Palos Verdes Estates resident.

The bill, which did not specify a sum to be appropriated, would make funds available to help buy a campus for the college which is scheduled to open in temporary quarters next September.

Original funds allocated for land purchases proved inadequate, state officials reported early this year. Nearly three times the \$5 million put aside by the Legislature will be needed for the site atop the Palos Verdes Peninsula, it has been estimated.

State officials charged that a rezoning action after the

Man Dies In 5-Car Collision

A five-car crash at Lomita Boulevard and Normandie Avenue has claimed the life of 53-year-old Edward A. Baudette Jr., a Torrance oil-field worker.

Baudette was dead when taken to Harbor General Hospital. He lived at 2431 W. 233th St.

The Baudette vehicle collided with one driven by Mrs. Doris C. Bellinger, 41, of Palos Verdes, who was enroute to Harbor General Hospital where she was a volunteer worker.

Baudette's pickup truck and the Bellinger auto collided, then struck a car waiting for the traffic signal, and then bounced into two parked cars before coming to a halt, California Highway Patrolmen reported.

Torrance High Conducts Tours

Parents and friends of students at Torrance High School have been invited to take a tour of the campus this week.

The tours will begin at 10 a.m. Monday through Friday and leave every hour. Reservations may be made by calling Dr. Carl Ahee, principal, at FA 6-8080, ext. 281.

Shout When You Speak, Says Board

Torrance school administrators will have to shout when they speak before small groups, following action by the Board of Education Monday evening.

The board vetoed purchase of a \$725 portable lectern with a public address system on grounds that "it isn't absolutely necessary."

"I have never felt any crying need for a lectern," Mrs. Kenneth E. Watts told the board.

District officials had recommended purchase of the lectern for use at principals' meetings, monthly meetings of the Torrance Education Advisory Committee, and other such gatherings. Dr. J. H. Hull, superintendent of schools, said the lectern was needed.

IN OTHER financial matters the board renewed a contract with the Verd-A-Ray Corp for incandescent and fluorescent lamps for a third year. The contract, which



KISS FOR DADDY . . . Samuel Thomsen, U.S. Consul in Hue, Viet Nam, gets a welcome home kiss from his daughter, Katy, as the family was reunited here last week. Thomsen, injured in the terrorist bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, is in the United States for consultation and two months of leave. He will return to Viet Nam about July 1. Also welcoming dad home are Samuel Jr., and Mrs. Thomsen, the former Judy Wolf of Torrance. (Press-Herald Photo)

City Fee Share Tops \$500,000

More than \$540,000 has been paid to Torrance as this city's share of state-collected vehicle license fees, State Controller Alan Cranston announced today.

Cranston said he has distributed \$112,891,298 to cities and counties as a partial advance on their share of the license fees.

Los Angeles County received \$18,319,033 as its share of the monies. Actual totals for Torrance showed \$541,466 paid to the city, based on a population of 128,500 persons.

AMOUNTS received by other cities in the area under the program include: Gardena, \$184,351; Hawthorne, \$180,559; Lawndale, \$104,712; Lomita, \$80,398; Redondo Beach, \$211,109; and Rolling Hills Estates, \$19,876.

The total represents 75 percent of the vehicle license fees which the state expects to receive during the six-month period ending May 31,

Training Course

Clifford G. Smith, juvenile officer of the Torrance Police Department, is among 26 representatives of police departments and sheriff's offices attending a training course at Pacific Grove today through May 1.



FUNNEL OF SMOKE . . . Heavy black smoke spirals up from a sledge pit at the Union Carbide Co.'s Torrance facility after the pit burst into flames at 1:05 p.m. Friday. Torrance firemen quickly doused the flames. A spokesman for the firm's industrial relations office blamed the blaze on spontaneous combustion. No one was injured and there was no damage to company facilities. (Press-Herald Photo by Henry Burke)

Public School Week Activities Reported

Public Schools Week will be observed in elementary and high schools throughout Torrance Monday through Friday.

Purpose of the national observance, first begun in California in 1920, is to focus attention on the year-round activities of the public schools.

Highlight of the week-long event at Torrance High will be Vocation Day program which is scheduled for Thursday. Torrance High students will have the opportunity to

get information on possible careers and vocations.

TOURS of South High will be conducted each day next week. The guided tours will be held at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

The week will close with the district science fair, scheduled at West High this year. Exhibits will be judged Thursday, with an awards ceremony scheduled for 9 p.m. Thursday. The fair will be open to the public Thurs-

day from 6 to 9:30 p.m. and all day Friday.

At Torrance Elementary School, grandparents will be invited to tour the new school Wednesday at 9 a.m. Stanley Roberts, principal, will conduct the tour.

OTHER ELEMENTARY schools in the district have planned special band concerts, science and art exhibits, open house tours, and other events during the week. Some schools already have held open house tours for parents.

Special events include a May Festival at Columbia School, to be held Friday, May 7, at 10 a.m., and a rhythm and dance festival scheduled at Hamilton School Wednesday evening. Jefferson and Madison and Lincoln schools will hold special tours throughout the week, as will Newton, Steele, and Yukon Schools.

Open houses have been scheduled Tuesday at Arnold, Calle Mayor, Carr, Flavia, Meadow Park, Perry, Seaside, and Walteria. Most of the events will begin at 7:30 p.m. and band concerts or science fairs will be held in conjunction with the open houses.

WEDNESDAY, several schools have scheduled open houses and science fairs. They include: Arlington, Cassimir, Crenshaw, Flavian, Se-

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Wrong Number Saves A Life

The life of an elderly Hermosa Beach man was saved Wednesday when a man reporting a bad check left a wrong number at the Torrance Police Station.

The caller left the number for Det. Joseph Capriotti, head of the forgery detail, when he called to report a \$200 bad check — but he transposed one of the numbers.

Capriotti called the number several times. Each time, he was greeted with a feeble "hello" and the line went dead. "The man just didn't sound right," Capriotti said, so he called a special agent at the telephone company

who checked the number.

The number belonged to George B. Belchee, 86, of 505 Hollowell Ave., Hermosa Beach. Capriotti called Hermosa Beach police to report the incident. An officer was dispatched to the home.

Officer Joseph Petrucelli found Belchee sitting on a living room sofa which was in flames. Belchee, too weak to move, was taken to South Bay Hospital, treated, and released.

Some minutes later, the original caller — Tec Cogswine of Redondo Beach — called Capriotti again. He had given Capriotti the wrong number.