

## Incumbents Rejected Throughout City

# Wilson, Uerkwitz Sweep Most Precincts

Dr. Donald E. Wilson and William J. Uerkwitz nearly made a clean sweep of the April 9 municipal election, a review of the official tabulations shows.

A breakdown of the voting throughout the city showed that one or the other led every precinct except two on their way to election to the City Council. In the two exceptions, each was tied with a third candidate.

All areas of town supported the winning trio—all areas of town rejected the incumbents, the figures indicate.

The North Torrance ballot set the pattern. Dr. Wilson received 2,564 votes, the highest incumbent vote was 693.

Voters who punched their ballots at El Retiro Park in the Riviera and those voting at the Knolls Lodge Recreation Room at 23701 S. Western Ave. split their ballots giving three candidates the same number of votes for the top spot.

At El Retiro, Dr. Wilson, Uerkwitz, and Blayne Asher

each received 171 votes. Closest challenger there was Orin P. Johnson, who received 97 votes.

At the Knolls Lodge polls, voters split votes among Wilson, Uerkwitz, and incumbent George Vico, giving each 61.

Of the remaining 59 consolidated precincts, Uerkwitz led in 12, and Wilson led in 47.

Proposition A, the measure which asked voters to repeal the ordinance setting up the city's uniform housing code, was approved in most areas

of the city. Voters in the Riviera, in the West Torrance Boulevard area, and in New Horizons and Marble Estates rejected the proposal.

The second proposition, which would have given substantial pay hikes to the mayor and councilmen, was soundly beaten in all precincts. Only one precinct—in the Palo Del Amo area—gave the measure more than 100 votes. There it received 107 "Yes" votes, but those opposed punched 239 times.

Elsewhere in town it was no contest, running like it did at Seaside, 214 to 35 against; or at Arlington, 218 to 33 against.

That marked the second time voters had overwhelmingly rejected proposals for council pay hikes.

Of the 54,918 voters eligible to punch ballots on April 9, only 16,509 or 30.06 per cent bothered to vote, the official tabulation shows.

Largest city precinct was at Waleria Park where 1,223

voters were eligible. Only 323 voted.

The best turnout was recorded at Newton School where 435 voters out of a possible 981 made it to the polls. Poorest apparently was at the polling place in the 4700 block of Torrance Boulevard where only 117 of an eligible 1,135 voted.

Beating the average was the Torrance Gardens voters near city hall where 342 of the 754 eligible voters found their way to the polls at 911 Felbar.

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**AIR MAIL SALUTE**... Looking over models of some of the aircraft which have carried air mail in the United States are (from left) Mayor Albert Isen; Hugh W. Arbouin, customer relations representative for the Torrance Post Office; Larry Bowman, president of the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce; and Carl L. Backlund, postmaster. May 15 will mark the Golden Anniversary of air mail service in the United States, Backlund said. The anniversary will be observed throughout the nation during the month of May. (Press-Herald Photo)

## Youths Leave More Often, Stay Longer

By NATALIE HALL  
Press-Herald Staff Writer  
Torrance teenagers are running away from home in greater numbers—and they are staying away longer. Very few can be categorized as true "hippie" runaways, however.

### 25-Year Fireman Retires

Captain Robert E. Moffitt, known around the Torrance Fire Station as "Old Reliable," retired Thursday after 25 years on the job.

Moffitt, who joined the Torrance Fire Department Feb. 16, 1943, as a temporary employee, was dubbed "Old Reliable" by Chief Robert Lucas, who said the captain has missed only six work days in his 25 years. And, Chief Lucas added, Moffitt was late only once during that time.

Captain Moffitt became a full-time fireman May 20, 1943, and was promoted to engineer Dec. 1, 1948. He was elevated to his present rank July 23, 1952.

The captain and his wife, Sybil, live at 2724 Arlington Ave. They are parents of two sons, John and Robin.

During World War I, Captain Moffitt served in the cavalry.

"Parents are just not communicating with their kids," according to Torrance police Sgt. Mel Hone, who has spent many an hour tracking down juvenile runaways and studying their problems.

"Parents often don't realize there's a problem until it manifests itself in this way," he stressed.

Looking into specific parent-child conflicts, Sergeant Hone stated that the boy-friend problem ranked high on the list of reasons why girls disappear.

"Mama tells daughter not to see Johnny any more, so she goes over to her girl-friend's house where she can see him for a few days," Sergeant Hone commented. However, few girls go so far as to elope with Johnny.

ALMOST ALL teen runaways come home on their own volition within a week, Sergeant Hone noted. The average disappearing act lasts three days.

Policewoman M. Duval, who is also deeply involved with the runaway situation, notes that school problems seem to account for a good percentage of the disappearances. During leisurely summer months, the number of runaways drops to about half the number reported during the winter, she pointed out.

Furthermore, the number seems to shoot upward near the end of the semester. In

May, 1967, 51 teenagers left home, but during June, the number dropped to 29. More than 60 young people ran away last January. That number plummeted to 32 in February.

If they're the hippie type, Officer Duval said, they have an inherent distaste for school in the first place. The few hippies produced in Torrance will usually head for

(See TEENS, Page A-2)

### DIG THROUGH EIGHT TONS

## \$700 Payroll Recovered From City Trash Truck

A frantic three-hour search through tons of rubbish ended happily for a Torrance family last week.

Problems began when Mrs. Ken L. Roberts, 1731 Gramercy Ave., noticed that a payroll envelope containing more than \$700 cash was nowhere to be found. Searching their home, Mrs. Roberts and her son Ritchie concluded that the envelope must have gotten mixed up with the trash.

That was at 10:30 a.m., more than an hour after a city garbage truck had spirited away the contents of their trash cans.

## Pipeline Breaks At Dow Facility; One Man Injured

Some 200 gallons of liquid ethyl benzene and styrene gushed from a broken pipeline at Dow Chemical Co. Friday afternoon, sending one

## Hospital Switches Top Job

Changes to top administrative posts at Torrance Memorial Hospital were revealed here yesterday.

Leonard A. Ensminger, vice president of the hospital and its chief administrator for nearly 15 years, announced his resignation, an action which was "accepted regretfully by the board," according to its president, Mrs. Boris S. Woolley. Ensminger did not reveal his plans.

Charles Johnson, who has been serving in recent months as administrator of Torrance Memorial Hospital and the Riviera Community Hospital, has been returned to Riviera as administrator there. Named to act as administrator at Torrance Memorial was Frank Cooper, former assistant.

(See HOSPITAL, Page A-2)

workman to the hospital for treatment of vapor inhalation. The victim was C. J. Geletko, 38, of 18814 Cranbrook Ave. Officials at Little Company of Mary Hospital said Geletko's condition was satisfactory.

Three engine companies, two trucks, and a salvage unit rushed to the Dow plant in response to the 3:30 p.m. alarm. Within 50 minutes, firefighters controlled the flood, washing the flammable liquid down drains.

Torrance Fire Department spokesmen said that one spark could have caused a tremendous explosion. In a similar leak at a chemical plant in Canada, a benzene explosion cost 13 workers their lives, fire officials said.

## Report on Downtown Area Due

Invitations to a report meeting of the Downtown Torrance Association are going out this weekend to businessmen, property owners, and others interested in the area, it was reported here yesterday.

(See DOWNTOWN, Page A-2)



JOSEPH MULLEN  
Dies in Vietnam

## Marine Dies in Vietnam

A Torrance Marine on patrol near Da Nang, Vietnam, was killed Wednesday, it was learned here yesterday.

Dead is Lance Cpl. Joseph William Mullen, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Swinburne, live at 1751 Marionette St. His parents were notified of the death Friday morning.

Marine Corps spokesmen said the 21-year-old Marine died from "fragmentation wounds caused by an explosive device" while he was on patrol with a small unit near Da Nang.

CORPORAL MULLEN was attached to the 3rd Battalion, 27th Marines. He had been in Vietnam since last September and arrived in Da Nang about a month ago.

He attended Torrance High School for three years, but was graduated from high school in Darby, Pa., where his father, Joseph Mullen, now lives.

CORPORAL MULLEN enlisted in the Marine Corps in June, 1966. He was employed by Burgmaster Corp. in Gardena prior to entering the service.

His mother was employed until recently in the dispatch department of the Press-Herald.

Funeral arrangements will be made when the body has been returned to the States.

## City Planners Ask Councilmen To Deny Permit

The controversy over the proposed Waleria dump will come to the fore again Tuesday at the City Council's 7 p.m. meeting.

For the second year in a row, owners of the 85-acre dump site are seeking a zoning variance from the city which would permit them to operate a landfill dump on their property.

A landfill, they say, is the only economically feasible way to reclaim the land, now gutted after years of gravel quarrying.

THE PERMIT request was turned down last year after Waleria residents vociferously protested the dump. More than 200 South Torrance residents showed up last month when the request for variance was denied at the city's Planning Commission meeting.

The denial was subsequently appealed to the City Council, which is expected to turn down the request once again.

Homeowner representatives say that landfill dumps would attract rats and seagulls to their neighborhood. Waleria residents also object to the noise, dust, and odors they

believe would result from such a dump.

WILLIAM BORTON, president of the Waleria Homeowners Association, told planning commissioners that similar landfill dumps have experienced uncontrollable problems with combustible methane gas seeping up from the buried rubbish.

Water experts also testified at the recent meeting that the dump could have a harmful effect on the natural underground water. It would be impossible, they said, to inspect the dump adequately.

Spokesmen for the owners denied that there would be any bad side effects from the dump. They pointed out that two similar dumps are being operated "nuisance free" immediately west of the proposed site in the city of Rolling Hills.

Dr. RICHARD Pomeroy of the Pasadena consulting firm of Pomeroy, Johnston, and Bailey, said that rubbish would be covered over every day. This, he said, would prevent rats from nesting or rummaging for food.

Pomeroy also stated that (See DUMP, Page A-2)

## Crash Victim Dies - - -

A 23-year-old San Pedro man injured Tuesday morning on the Harbor Freeway died Thursday at 9:30 p.m. at Harbor General Hospital. Richard J. Werfelmann was injured when his car struck a guard rail near the Anaheim Street overcrossing and then dropped to the street. Police said Werfelmann was traveling home from a National Guard meeting when the accident occurred.

Two Boys Still Critical - - -

Still in critical condition with injuries received in a traffic accident April 6 are Kenneth Goins, 18, of 2205 Gramercy Ave., and Everett Erickson, 15, of 1327 Acacia Ave. Goins, a senior at Torrance High, still lies unconscious at Bay Harbor Hospital, Harbor City. Erickson is reported paralyzed from the chest down at Riverside General Hospital. The crash occurred near Blythe, Calif., when the boys' International carry-all ran off the road. Killed in the mishap were Michael Branstetter, 18; Donald DuPuis, 18; and Timothy Fraser, 19; all of Torrance. Two other boys escaped with relatively minor injuries.

## City Gets \$606,089 - - -

Torrance has received \$606,089 as its share of a partial advance on state-collected "in lieu" taxes on motor vehicles, according to Houston I. Flournoy, state controller. Some \$23.8 million was given to Los Angeles County. The funds represent about 75 per cent of the taxes the state expects to collect during the six months which ends May 31.