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AFTERMATH OF FIRE . . . More than \$100,000 in damages was reported here Thursday after flames swept through stores in the Carson Shopping Plaza at Carson Street and Normandie Avenue. The flames broke out in a laundry and spread to three

other stores before they were controlled by county firefighters. Officials said an explosion of some kind started the fire. Firefighters remained on the scene for nearly four hours after answering the early morning alarm. (Press-Herald Photo)

Carson Center Hit By Explosion, Fire

Damage Put at \$10,000

Fire swept through a Carson area shopping center early Thursday morning, destroying a laundry and damaging three other stores in the center.

Damage was estimated at more than \$100,000.

An explosion engulfed the laundry, located at 1159 W. Carson St., in flames. Cause of the explosion is still under investigation.

Flames were shooting out of the building when county firefighters arrived on the scene.

THREE other stores were damaged by the flames. They include a barber shop, a beauty salon, and the Piza Palace restaurant. The stores are located in the Carson Shopping Center, Normandie Avenue and Carson Street.

The laundry is owned by Raymond E. Shore, 48, of 205 Via Los Miradores. It was totally destroyed. Damage to the laundry was estimated at \$70,000.

Capt. William Town of the County Fire Department said the alarm was delayed. "The person who reported the fire didn't have a dime for a phone call and he couldn't find any place open at 1 a.m.," the captain said.

FIREMEN remained on the scene for nearly four hours after bringing the flames—which were visible to firefighters on the way to the location—under control.

Main concern of firefighters was to prevent the fire from spreading to the west and engulfing the W. T. Grants Co. store, Captain Town said. An aerial ladder was set up and officials (See FIRE, Page A-3)



SWIMMING DISPLAY . . . These six young ladies will be featured next Friday and Saturday in a special production number in the city's 13th annual Aquacade and Carnival, to be staged at the city plunge. Based on the tales of Hans Christian Andersen, the aquacade theme is "Tales to Tell." Pictured in the "Lost in the Forest" number are (from left) Teresa Turner, 14; Elaine Coons, 13; Lorraine Mondor, 12; Paula Pagland, 11; Paula Boyd, 14; De De Wain, 14. (Press-Herald Photo)

Government in Action

Youths See Where All the Action Is

While teenagers in many parts of the county this summer showed up at government offices to demonstrate for a variety of causes, 23 Torrance teenagers made the rounds of local official headquarters for a totally different reason.

You might call it a "learn-in" Students in an experimen-

Hearing On Budget Scheduled

A public hearing on a \$26.4 million school budget will be held tomorrow by the Torrance Board of Education.

The budget, as it is to be presented to the board, will call for expenditures of \$26,451,573 and a total tax rate of slightly more than \$4.25 per \$100 assessed valuation.

Dr. Frank Mattox, assistant superintendent of schools for business, said nearly \$1.4 million will be used from the reserves to balance the spending program.

PRELIMINARY budgets submitted to the board called for a tax rate of \$4.37 per \$100—an increase of about 12 cents over the current rate. The tax rate proposed in the final budget is expected to be about half a cent less than the current rate.

Actual tax rates will be set by the county Board of Supervisors once the final budget has been adopted by the local trustees.

DR. MATTOX said total school district income is expected to be \$25,069,109.

Although some reserve funds will be used to balance the budget, the district will have some \$3.4 million in reserves left.

Tomorrow's session is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the school district offices, 2335 Plaza del Amo. Agendas for the session are available in all Torrance libraries.

tal class in local government conducted during summer school by James Armstrong, Torrance High School social science teacher, spent four hours a day for six weeks learning what makes local government tick.

ARMSTRONG, a Torrance planning commissioner in his spare time, believes students will learn more about government "if you take them where the action is," than if they just read a book.

To prove his theory, he drew up a plan last Spring which won the endorsement of the Board of Education whereby he would use the

community as his summer classroom.

After spending an introductory week at Torrance High where Armstrong gave them the history and background of local government, members of the class spent the month of July touring city, school, and county offices. They attended formal meetings of the school board, city council, and county board of supervisors, and they chatted informally with such persons as the city manager, the president of the board of education, and a deputy district attorney. (See CLASS, Page A-3)

Post Office To Stay Open On Saturdays

Torrance Post Office branches are maintaining regular hours on Saturdays and have not been affected by the controversy over postal hiring that's been raging in Washington.

Saturday window service in many post offices across the country had been scheduled to close last Saturday because Congress had voted cutbacks on personnel.

However, in the last minute of play, the Senate approved a bill rescinding the cutbacks and sent the measure to the House of Representatives, which joined in approval.

The action was enough to keep Torrance postal windows open on Saturdays.

Flames Destroy Home

Family Says 'Thanks' for Help

"We thank God for this, but even more so for His love and concern expressed through many friends and neighbors who have been doing so much to help us in our time of need."

Those words are from the Albert Klempan family, whose home at 3950 Newton St. was virtually destroyed by fire late Tuesday evening.

The words were addressed to "Our WALTERIA friends."

Those friends rallied to provide shelter and other necessities for the family—which includes eight children—after the fire swept through their home.

Mrs. Klempan and four of her children—Rick, 18, Scott, 13, Todd, 3, and Gina, 18 months—have been staying with the Hughes family at 24404 Hawthorne Blvd. Eleven-year-old Jeff has been staying with the Holland family on Bluff Street.

Barbara, 17, is baby sitting for a family in Rolling Hills and 15-year-old Debra is with a family in Redondo Beach.

Jeannette Dilger, 20, who had been living with the Klempan family, is now staying with Tess Gowins at 3773 W. Pacific Coast Hwy. Mrs. Gowins is Mrs. Klempan's daughter.

Klempan has remained at the home to protect the property.

Clothes for the Klempan family are being collected from neighbors and friends by Mrs. Raymond A. Reynolds, 3960 Bluff St.

In addition, the WALTERIA Business Women's

Club is taking charge of efforts to move furniture and other belongings saved from the flames. Storage space is being provided by Jack Brown of WALTERIA Paints.

Cause of the fire, which did about \$12,000 in damage to the home, is still under investigation.

Important family papers were saved from the flames, the Klempan family reported.

Spokesmen for the insurance company have assured the family that "everything will be taken care of."

The Klempan's letter follows:

"To our WALTERIA friends,
 "In a day when all you hear is about violence and bloodshed, you begin to think there's no humanity in the human race. Then you have a personal tragedy and find out how wonderful people can be.

"Tuesday night when our home erupted in flames, it was a miracle none of our family was hurt. We thank God for this, but even more so for His love and concern expressed through the many friends and neighbors who have been doing so much to help us in our time of need. Words cannot begin to tell how deeply touched we all are.

"Special thanks to our super-duper Fire Department—and to our policemen, too. They were real angels of mercy.

"To each of you from each of us—God bless you.

"Al and Mary Klempan and Rick, Scott, Jeff, Muffin, Deedie, Todd, Gina and Jeanette."

Andersen Tales Theme Of City's Water Show

Torrance's 13th annual Aquacade and Carnival will take its audience to the land of fairy tales adapted from the imaginary stories of Hans Christian Andersen.

Sponsored by the city's Recreation Department, the two-part event begins with a carnival next Friday and Saturday at 6 p.m.

Sign Tour Scheduled By Council

Torrance residents interested in the proposed sign ordinance have been invited to attend a special city tour and discussion scheduled by the City Council for Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Buses will take City Councilmen and their guests to areas of the city featuring various types of signs. A public discussion at City Hall will follow the bus trip at 7:30 p.m.

Those interested in taking the tour are asked to make a reservation before noon Monday by calling the Office of the City Manager, City Hall.

During the tour, city staff members will provide information and answer questions concerning the proposed sign ordinance.

Ring Stolen While Clerk Distracted

Two women wearing nurses uniforms are suspected of stealing a \$2,650 diamond engagement ring Wednesday from Morgan's Jewelry, 21934 Hawthorne Blvd.

The clerk on duty told police that one of the women kept him busy, asking while the other suspect brot to look at various items, browsed about the store.

Construction Worker Dies . . .

A Wilmington construction worker died early Friday morning after he was overcome by sewer gas while working on a construction project at 220th Street and Grace Avenue. Dead on arrival at Harbor General Hospital was Raul Solis, 38, of 1223 G St. His brother-in-law, Lorenzo Chacon, 35, of the same address, was admitted to the hospital for treatment. Solis was working in a manhole when he was overcome by the fumes. Chacon also was overcome by the gas when he attempted to rescue Solis.

Drug Charges Jail Youth . . .

Torrance police confiscated 187 capsules marked "SKE," five white tablets, and 20 pills in a bottle marked "Norlestrin" when they arrested a 19-year-old youth Thursday on charges of drunkenness and possession of drugs for sale. Police said they found Michael W. Kropfovich, 20520 Avis Ave., seated on the ground in the 20500 block of Madrona Avenue about midnight. His speech was slurred and he could barely stand up, police said. The capsules and white tablets, still unidentified, were packaged in plastic bags.

Home Burglarized . . .

Burglars forced a screen and climbed in an open window Friday at the home of Oscar Butterfield, 4642 191st St., and removed \$495 worth of home appliances and jewelry. Reported missing were a transistor radio, a portable television set, a woman's wristwatch, a projector, and a portable phonograph.