TORRANCE HERALD

ESTABLISHED 1914 — 8 PAGES — ONE SECTION

24th YEAR—No. 40. TORRANCE, CALIF., OCTOBER 6, 1938 PER COPY 5c

Tax Strike Looms in Alondra Park Dist.

Charles Myers Takes Own Life; Act Stuns Hundreds of Friends

As word of his self-inflicted death spread about the city last Friday and Saturday, all friends and acquaintances of the late Charles F. Myers, 44, mortician, Legion post commander, sportsman and civic worker, experienced a deep shock of personal loss. That feeling was even more apparent at the funeral service conducted Tuesday afternoon at the chapel where he had directed the last rites for hundreds here during his 15 years' residence.

THE LATE CHARLES MYERS
. . . firm will continue

"Charlie," as he was affectionately known, took his own life last Friday afternoon. He left no notes giving any farewell messages or reasons why he attached a hose to the exhaust of his motor hearse and directed the deadly carbon monoxide fumes into the interior of the machine where he had composed himself for the sleep from which there is no earthly wakening.

He was alone at the mortuary building that afternoon but when Mrs. Myers, his wife for 16 years, left to visit her critically ill father, the 80-year-old O. W. Stone who was senior member of the mortuary firm, at Wilmar, "Charlie" was in good spirits. He had returned from a successful hunting trip in the High Sierras a few days earlier.

No Note or Letter Found

On her return from Wilmar, Mrs. Myers found her husband dead. He was lying in the body of the hearse, a small pillow under his head. Thrown over the top of the machine was a heavy canvas tarpaulin. The motor was still running, pouring the gas fumes from the exhaust thru the hose and into the hearse interior. Mrs. Myers summoned their good friends Mr. and Mrs. Grant Barkdull. Barkdull had been succeeded by Mr. Myers as head of the local Legion post last month.

The fire department's pulmotor squad was hurriedly called and Engineers Benner, Winters and Parry were dispatched to the mortuary by Director John H. Stroh of the Public Safety department. But their efforts were fruitless. Mr. Myers was beyond recall. With Mrs. Myers and the Barkdulls, Director Stroh made a search of Mr. Myers' clothing, the garage and his office in quest of any note or letter but none could be found.

That Mr. Myers was under a nervous tension was known to his hunting companions including his father, Charles E. Myers of Davenport, Washington. Sitting before the camp-fire, "Charlie" had admitted he was unable to rest and was in need of a prolonged vacation. But he was in excellent spirits and as host at a venison dinner to a group of friends Thursday night gave no sign that he was on the verge of self-destruction.

Father Flies Here

"Charlie" Myers was a wartime flier. After training in this country he went to France where his ability as an instructor kept him from actual combat duty. He was a member of the 36th Aero Squadron, stationed at St. Jean de Mont Aerial Gunnery school. After the Armistice and his honorable discharge he continued his interest in aviation and delighted in taking his friends for flights about Southern California.

A native of Davenport, Washington, where his parents, a brother and a sister still reside, Mr. Myers enlisted in the air corps when the U. S. entered the World War. In addition to his wife and her father, he was survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Myers (his father flew here Saturday to assist with the funeral arrangements); his sister Miss Olive Myers of Davenport, (and brothers Jay of Altadena, Phillip and Robert of San Diego, David of Okanagan, Wash., and Richard of Davenport.

He joined Bert S. Crossland Post, American Legion, shortly after he came to Torrance and continued to be one of its most active members altho he always declined election to the commandership until this year.

Mr. Myers was a distinct credit to his chosen profession of the past 15 years. His gracious and sincere courtesies helped many families over the first poignant grief that always accompanies the demise of loved ones. His tact and attention to the smallest details gave his mortuary firm a high standing in this district.

This community has been fortunate in having a man such as Mr. Myers in the service he provided. The city is also fortunate that his death will not deprive this area of the mortuary facilities of the Stone and Myers firm, Mrs. Myers having announced yesterday that the establishment would continue to provide mortuary and ambulance service as usual.

FIX MEETING DATE

President John E. Miller of the Torrance Coordinating Council has fixed the time for the next meeting as Monday evening, Oct. 10, 7:30 o'clock at the city courtroom.

Large Crowd Attends Rites; Legion Men Are Pallbearers

With the bier banked by beautiful floral offerings and guarded by the colors of the American Legion post, Auxiliary and Sons of Legion and Rev. Ben Lingenfelter officiating, the funeral services for the late Charles F. Myers were held Tuesday afternoon at Stone and Myers' chapel. All seats in the chapel were taken and many were forced to stand outside during the brief service.

After the rites, during which Mrs. Lorraine Ulrich sang two sacred numbers, private committal service was held at Inglewood cemetery. Active pallbearers were Grant Barkdull, Lou Deininger, Wallace Post, Lyle Doan, Floyd Boyle, and James H. Scott; honorary pallbearers were Col. N. F. Jamieson, James Burchett, Earl Conner, Alex McPhail, Verne Babcock, H. M. Bailey, Ray Leslie, Charles Smith and Percy Phoenix, all prominent Legionnaires.

Doan Elected Legion Leader

At a regular business meeting Tuesday night, members of Bert S. Crossland post, American Legion, elected Lyle Doan, well-known grocery store proprietor as commander succeeding the late Charles F. Myers. D. A. Murphy was chosen first vice-commander and George Thompson was named second vice-commander. The executive board reappointed Tom Babbitt as adjutant.

In memory of Commander Myers, the post's charter was draped in black and the flag which covered his casket at the funeral Tuesday afternoon was arranged for display above the clubhouse mantel for the year of Mr. Myers' term of office.

The post voted to enter a float in the Factory Frolic, Oct. 28 and 29 and the Sons of Legion will parade their color squad in the Saturday procession, Oct. 29.

New Lomita Water Lines Are Delayed

Installation of new pipe lines to serve some 200 homes in the area recently annexed to the Lomita County Water District No. 13 by a bond election is expected to start about the first of next year, according to word received this week from the office of R. J. Schonerd, chief mechanical engineer. Delay in starting the work was attributed mainly to the fact that much of the job will be a WPA project and this takes time to accomplish.

When the county takes over the system next June, old lines now operated by a private company will be abandoned, it was learned. The district will have in operation a 25,000-gallon reservoir on the hill back of 263rd street and will pump water to it from the wells and pumping station near the head of Cypress street.

H. S. Assembly Hall Now Being Plastered

Now being plastered, the new Torrance high school assembly hall is expected to be finished and ready for occupancy about the middle of next month, according to Principal Thomas Elson. A special dedication program and concert will be the first event to be held in the $100,700 structure which will seat about 700.

Five Changes In Co. Charter On Nov. 8 Ballot

Field secretaries for supervisors, as well as members of all county commissions, would be exempted from civil service in one of five proposed amendments to the Los Angeles county charter which will be placed on the Nov. 8 ballot, by order of the board of supervisors. The same amendment would place the chief deputy county assessor in the classified civil service.

Proposed amendment No. 1 would increase the salaries of supervisors from $5,000 to $7,500 a year, which would be the first pay increase for the members of the board since the adoption of the county charter in 1913. If the increase is voted, it will be effective in 1940 for the supervisors from the Second, Fourth (Torrance) and Fifth districts and in 1942 for those from the First and Third districts.

No. 2 would limit salaries of the sheriff, district attorney and assessor to $10,000 a year, instead of their present salary of $12,000. But observers pointed out that the phrasing of the amendment might lead uninformed voters who favor lower salaries to vote against No. 2, since it is merely stated "shall the salaries . . . be fixed at $10,000 a year," with no indication they are $2,000 higher than that.

The third amendment would take the jurisdiction over county parks and recreation areas from the county forester, leaving them in a separate department of their own.

The fifth amendment would protect the civil service employes from summary discharge or demotion by giving the civil service commission the right to review and approve or veto discharges or demotions.

County Teachers to Visit Columbia Steel Plant

An opportunity to observe the materials and complicated processes involved in the making of modern steel products will be afforded teachers of Los Angeles county during a field trip thru the Columbia Steel plant here Nov. 7 to be held as a feature of the annual teachers' institute.

The field trip is limited to 75 teachers, and Arthur L. Young, vice-principal of Redondo Union high school, will act as chairman. Other field trips include a trip thru a tire factory, Los Angeles harbor, an El Segundo oil refinery, the Los Angeles stock exchange, a large bakery, Griffith Park observatory, the county jail, a superior court, a night court, the general hospital, juvenile hall, and a hospital.

Accidents Send Three to Hospital

Three emergency cases were received at Torrance Memorial hospital during the past week. Russell M. Quayle, local butcher residing at 2326 Sonoma, was treated Monday for a serious butcher-knife cut; John Brady, 1408 Elm, had to have a fish hook extricated from a finger on his left hand last Saturday, and 15-year-old Carl Frizzell, 1160 220th, was brought to the hospital by Officer Willard Haslam after he had rammed his scooter into a building at Marcelina and Cravens.

Democrats Meet Here on Sunday

A meeting of the Torrance Democratic club has been called for Sunday morning, Oct. 9, at 11 o'clock in the Moose hall by Chairman F. D. Foley. A prominent speaker will briefly outline tentative plans for the Democratic gubernatorial campaign. Tom Hyde is vice-chairman, Mrs. Delphine Smith is secretary and Mrs. Neil McConlogue is treasurer of the club.

Lintott Elected To Bank Board

Henry T. Lintott, assistant general superintendent of the Torrance plant, Columbia Steel company, was elected a member of the board of directors of the Torrance National Bank Monday. He replaces Carl S. Warner, who was recently assigned to Pittsburg as chief engineer of the Columbia plant there.

Herald Acquires New Circulation Manager

Publisher Grover C. Whyte this week announced that W. B. Wooldridge, an experienced newspaper man, has been added to The Herald's staff as circulation manager. Wooldridge has taken over all details of this newspaper's distribution and is now working in various sections of the city to acquaint himself with Herald readers—present and prospective.

He is a former newspaper publisher, having issued Boonville, Missouri's paper for many years. He was in charge of circulation for newspapers in Santa Barbara, Ventura and Santa Ana where his genial personality was well known. For four years he managed a bank which he installed at Maricopa in Kern county, retiring from that position when the bank became a branch of the Bank of America.

The new Herald representative is an active Mason, Shriner and Elk and is a former Kiwanian. No "high pressure" circulation supervisor, Wooldridge has spent the last two weeks becoming acquainted with The Herald's policy, the Torrance community and interests of its residents. He sought this background in order to appreciate Torrance people's viewpoints and to assist in broadening the field of this newspaper's service to the community.

W. B. WOOLDRIDGE

On his "get acquainted" calls thruout the city, Wooldridge will also serve as a news-reporter. In introducing him to the community, The Herald bespeaks for Wooldridge the courtesy local residents extend to their neighbor—a friendly reception. A widower, Wooldridge is residing at 1419 Marcelina avenue.

Local sports fans will find The Herald's new staff member is one of their wide fraternity. A story about his athletic career will be found in the sports section of today's edition.

Lovers' Quarrel Ends In Murder and Suicide

Six shots from a nickle-plated .45 calibre revolver spellel murder and suicide yesterday afternoon for a San Pedro man and woman in and beside a car parked a mile east of Hawthorne avenue on Lomita boulevard.

Fred Aldridge, 42-year-old former Naval officer and deputy tax assessor, shot and killed Mrs. Charlotte Lena Cowger, 31-year-old proprietor of a dress shop in San Pedro and then turned the weapon on himself to die a few minutes later.

According to information given Sergeant Ernest Ashton by San Pedro friends of Mrs. Cowger, a divorcee who had been living with Aldridge until recently, the tragedy was not entirely unexpected.

It was known that he was carrying a gun and had been drinking heavily. This morning he called Mrs. Cowger, an attractive brunette, and made an appointment to go for a ride "and settle our troubles," police were informed.

Found by Salesman

The woman apparently knew Aldridge was in a murderous rage after they parked about a half-mile west of the Hydril plant. She had thrown up both hands to her throat as he fired and two of the bullets injured her hands before plunging into her neck. She must have died instantly.

Then Aldridge, according to police, must have got out of the car, walked around to the side where his victim was lying half in and half out of the machine and shot himself twice above the heart and once thru the right side of his head.

The bodies were discovered by Charles D. Munroe, salesman for an oil company who lives in San Pedro. Munroe drove by the parked car, which was registered to Aldridge, and noticed the figures of the man and woman lying beside the machine. He told police he thought they were drunk until he backed his car closer and observed the blood. Munroe then drove to the Hydril plant from where he called the sheriff's office.

Had Navy Pension Check

Sergeant Ashton and Officer Percy Bennett heard the radio broadcast and proceeded at once to the scene of the tragery. Munroe said he found the bodies about 2:12 in the afternoon. Aldridge died about 2:45 without recovering consciousness. The re-

(Continued on Page 6)

Engineer Asks County Funds to Develop New Industry on Normandie Avenue Near City

County funds to complete final experiments with a new method of iron ore reduction that would bring a new industry to Los Angeles county and employment for hundreds of workmen were requested this week by Walter G. Clark, a commercial engineer, in a letter to the supervisors.

Clark said the Los Angeles department of water and power had advanced $15,000, part of which was to be paid back when commercial production was started at the plant where experiments are under way at 20101 South Normandie avenue, in the Los Angeles shoestring adjoining Torrance.

Some $70,000 was expended by Clark and his associates in preliminary work and a pilot plant was constructed in Glendale in 1936. That burned and the Normandie avenue plant, idle since a plan to produce pigments failed to work, was leased. Some $62,000 was expended in Glendale and at the Normandie avenue plant and private funds now are depleted just as the work is in its final stages Clark said.

"Our product is iron in the form of low carbon iron sponge, ready for steel mills to convert into required commodities from stainless steel to steel rails and ship plates," Clark told the county officials. "A commercial reduction plant also will deliver carbon black, obtained as a by-product and used in manufacture of auto tires."

The engineer said a mine was under purchase contract 220 miles from Los Angeles, estimated to yield 250,000 tons of 64 percent iron ore and there is 70 tons of crushed ore ready for final tests at the Normandie avenue plant.

"We can develop a basic industry for Los Angeles county as soon as we finish our tests, extend employment and provide an outlet for surplus electricity and gas," Clark asserted. He said low cost electricity and gas and high grade iron ore was necessary for the plant to operate. The city has quoted them a low rate and gas company likewise, Clark said.

Building Total for 9 Months Is $2,780,995

Will new construction in Torrance during the final three months of 1938 amount to $219,005?

If it does then this city will enter the ultra-exclusive $3,000,000 class of cities this year.

Building here during the past nine months has amounted to $2,780,995, according to records kept at the city engineer's office. Last year the construction total to Oct. 1 was $1,017,581.

September building amounted to $70,322 as compared with $21,436 for the same month in 1937. During the past month, permits were issued for seven new homes, four private garages, one service station, three industrial buildings, six tanks, a church, an oil derrick, three alteration and repair jobs to residences and one industrial alteration project.

New Building Jobs

Among the recent permits were those for the following construction jobs: W. R. Steiber, Long Beach, for an additional room to the residence and a double frame garage at 23750 Pennsylvania, $300; L. M. Hudson of 1911 220th is erecting an additional sun porch to his property at 2032½ Andreo, $150; N. A. Hurst, Los Angeles, is erecting a 2,500-gallon wooden water tank and tower at 17125 Redondo avenue, $150.

The Standard Oil company is building a steel derrick on its Marble lease for its No. 9 well in South Torrance, $5,000; General Petroleum is building a sand filter and salt tower at its refinery plant for $2,500; Flormand Delsigne, 712 F Amapola is building a four-room frame house on Emerald street for $2,000; C.C.M.O. is repairing a wooden derrick at its No. 15 well on Cedar street about 200 feet north of Sepulveda boulevard for $1,800, and H. P. Cabel is installing two 550-gallon tanks at the southwest corner of Highway 101 and Hawthorne avenue for $300.

R. C. Chriss is erecting a 2,500-gallon water tank and tower at 17210 Redondo avenue, $150; Kern Petroleum corporation of Los Angeles is building a wooden oil derrick at 2106 235th street, $5,000; M. Graniczny of Moneta is constructing a corrugated iron building for a gas engine on 178th west of Western for $400; John G. Wilson, 1926 Plaza del Amo, is building a 20 by 28-foot frame house at 2404 Andreo for $800.

Oil Activity Declines Here; Gains in Lomita

Completion by Standard Oil of another well, the Marble No. 1-14, from 4,986 feet for 539 barrels of 25.7 gravity and 500,000 cubic feet of gas and preparations by operators of the Blue Bell outpost at 241st and Pennsylvania to resume operations were the outstanding activities in the South Torrance field the past week.

Meanwhile activity in the Lomita-Harbor City field continued to increase and now it is rated as the most active district in Southern California. Some of the recent completions in this district are: R. R. Bush Oil, Gimenez No. 1, 340 barrels of 29.5 gravity cutting 1.6 percent; General Petroleum Poggi No. 9, 351 barrels of 29.2 gravity cutting 4.4 percent; Isco Petroleum's Extension No. 1, 155 barrels of 29.8 gravity cutting 0.8 percent and Ring Oil's Ring-Hawkins No. 1, 412 barrels of 29.2 gravity cutting 2 percent.

Extending the sector about a quarter of a mile east, Texas company has completed its important test well, Oakley No. 1, at 253rd near Dodge for an estimated 500 barrels of about 29.5 gravity. The output is described as increasing and may exceed 600 barrels. Gas flow is about 300,000 cubic feet and depth is 5,197 feet.

In the South Torrance field Standard Oil has made location for two more wells on its Marble lease, four blocks west of Pennsylvania. At 236th and Pennsylvania Mildon Oil is completing Frownfelter No. 1 from 4,960 feet. Oglesby and Allison are finishing Gerner No. 1 on Narbonne south of 236th from 5,166 feet.

No Relief Gained from Supervisors; Meeting Here Tonight

A commitment that only stated a matter of policy in regard to appropriation of $144,000 in gasoline tax funds next year to aid taxpayers in the tax-topheavy Alondra Park assessment district and an order for re-appraisal of the 320-acre park north of Torrance were the tangible results of a hearing on the district's grave tax problem Tuesday morning in the board of supervisors' chamber.

LELAND H. FORD
. . . he battled in vain

Nothing was gained from the hearing, attended by more than 300 of the district's taxpayers, in the way of immediate relief from the assessments to meet bond interest and redemption charges totaling $97,645 which is due this year. This fact, together with the knowledge that at least two new supervisors will come on the county board Jan. 1, has caused many of the district taxpayers to assert "all we got out of the Tuesday hearing was a lot of half-baked promises."

That further efforts—perhaps a general "tax strike"—will be necessary at once to obtain the relief so urgently demanded by nearly every property owner in the Alondra Park assessment district is the opinion of leaders in the movement to clear the property of the tax liens. These efforts are expected to be the chief topics to be discussed tonight at a general meeting of the recently-organized Alondra Park Property Owners' association. The meeting will be held in the Civic Auditorium starting at 8 o'clock with Mayor William H. Tolson, president, presiding.

May Form Special Group

A complete report on the hearing before Supervisors Leland M. Ford, Gordon McDonough and Herbert C. Legg — Supervisors Jessup and John Anson Ford were absent—will be given by Judge Frank Carrell of Inglewood, who served as spokesman for the Alondra Park delegation Tuesday. It was learned today that one possible solution to the tax problem may be the creation of a special committee to continue the fight before the supervisors. This committee, it was suggested, could have as its nucleus the city attorneys of Torrance, Gardena and Redondo Beach.

The attorneys were instructed at the mass meeting here Sept. 28 to investigate the legal angles of the entire debt lifting effort and submit a report as soon as possible.

Appraisal of the 320 acres comprising Alondra Park, which cost the taxpayers $3,500 an acre some 10 years ago, will be made shortly by county engineers as the next step in an effort to aid the property owners, it was decided Tuesday by the board of supervisors.

McDonough Balks

Before the crowd of property owners that packed the board's meeting room, Supervisor Leland M. Ford induced the two other members of the board present to go on record as agreeing to appropriate next year the amount of the appraisal toward purchase of the remaining $662,000 in bonds of the old Mattoon Act district that are still outstanding.

Ford said he would move to place $662,000 in next year's county budget to purchase the outstanding bonds and retire them as soon as possible. Supervisor Ford is a candidate for Congress in the 16th district and expects to be in Washington next Jan. 1, however.

Supervisor Gordon McDonough, as chairman of Tuesday's board meeting in the absence of Chairman Roger Jessup, balked at this however, and explained that if the board did this a precedent would be set whereby property owners in some 30 districts would demand that the supervisors purchase the bonds in their districts. Supervisors H. C. Legg agreed with him.

Total Assessments Given

Legg's term expires Dec. 5 and he will not be a member of the board next year, but he went on record with Ford and McDonough as agreeing "in policy" to appropriate $144,000 in gasoline tax funds next year to aid the taxpayers. No aid was extended to A. and I. districts this year.

In the opinion of all who attended the supervisorial hearing, Judge Carrell made a fine, logical presentation in behalf of the assessment protestants and Super-

(Continued on Page 6)

Council Meets Next Tuesday

The city council will meet Tuesday evening, Oct. 11, at 7:45 o'clock in the city hall. One of the principal actions to be taken will be to start the proposed city-wide re-zoning ordinance on its way to become a municipal statute.

The ordiance committee may present its report on findings pertaining to the petition received by the council Sept. 27 asking that legalized gambling games be permitted to operate here under city license.

Lomita Gains As Torrance Postal Receipts Slump

While the Lomita postoffice was making a five and one-half percent gain during the last quarter ending Sept. 30, the Torrance postoffice was taking a four percent loss, according to reports issued this week by Postmaster Birda Paddock of Lomita and Earl Conner of Torrance.

Duing the past quarter, postal receipts here totaled $8,684.72 as compared to $9,064.56 for the same period in 1937. The total receipts for the year to date at the Torrance postoffice are $26,883.42. The total for the first nine months of 1937 was $29,218.35.

"While the drop in postal revenue is $379.84 for the past three months here, we are not losing any sleep over it," Postmaster Conner said. "Instead we are anticipating a record-breaking final quarter and a larger volume of Christmas business than ever before. I believe that the postoffice will show a gain over the previous year at the close of business on Dec. 31."

Torrance Tennis Club Wins Match

By a victory of 18 to 10 over the Wilmington club, the Torrance Tennis club advanced to within four points of fifth place in the Inter-Cities League tournament last Sunday. The local players will meet Yosemite club at Eagle Rock on Oct. 16, according to Les Prince, secretary.

All-Color Steel Movie Coming Here

Arrangements were completed this week by E. M. Barber, general superintendent of the Columbia Steel plant, for the screening of "Steel—Man's Servant," a four-reel all-color drama of steel-making from the ore mine to the finished product, at the Civic Auditorium afternoon and evening of Oct. 22. The film is to be presented by United States Steel subsidiaries. All employes of the local steel plant and their families will be invited to see the picture and admission will be by ticket only.