

# BLAST, FIRE GUTS CITY BUILDING

EDITED in Torrance — PRINTED in Torrance — OWNED by Torrance Folks — SINCE 1914

## TORRANCE HERALD

5¢  
Delivered By Mail  
\$2 Yearly

36th YEAR — NO. 4

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1950

Twenty Four Pages.



MRS. BENNY WALLACE AND "ELMER"  
... They Didn't Think They'd Ever See Each Other Again

### Pup Survives Two Weeks Locked in Stolen Automobile

"Elmer," a frail, trembling, nearly starved black and white Fox Terrier was eating heartily again this week and back on the road to recovery after spending two weeks locked in a stolen car without food or water.

The foot-high pup, a pet of Benny Wallace of 18800 Prairie avenue, was in his owner's car when it was stolen last January 4. The thief abandoned the car at the Pico Avenue Navy Landing in Long Beach and for two weeks hundreds of sailors passed the car and saw "Elmer" looking forlornly at them from the locked car. Passerby assumed the owner of the car and dog was working nearby and did not challenge the strange circumstances until last week.

Ray O'Dowd, a Long Beach cab driver, noticed Elmer's emaciated condition and with the help of a Long Beach police officer managed to get some warm milk to the pup before turning the dog over to the Long Beach Animal Shelter. They put the nearly starved Terrier on a milk and Pabulum diet.

Mrs. Wallace took the dog to a veterinarian who said that it was remarkable the animal survived the ordeal.



BELIEVES IN SIGNS ... Mrs. Bertha Hedberg, Chamber of Commerce stenographer, displays newly arrived placards, which will be distributed to members of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce this week. —Herald photo.

### Moose Wield Picks

The Torrance Moose want a new club house and they know how to get it. Some 25 of them have begun wielding picks and shovels excavating for a foundation at Western avenue near Abalone street. They expect to have their reinforced concrete building completed by April 1.

Cecil Smith, governor of the lodge, said the building will include a large meeting hall, kitchen, storage space, rest rooms and club room.

### Bus Curtailment OK'd by Council; Fare Hike Asked

Curtailment of bus service on certain routes served by the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines and a five-cent hike in fares, was okayed by the City Council Tuesday night.

Early morning runs on the Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Hawthorne routes will be eliminated, according to M. A. Chamberlain, manager of the local lines. The last run at night on each of the above lines also will be cut, he said.

Not affected by the curtailment is the local line serving Lomita, Harbor City, Rolling Hills, Waverly, Hollywood Riviera, and Seaside Ranchos.

The proposed fare hike must first be approved by the Board of Public Utilities in Los Angeles.

Rates for school children's tickets will be half the price of the new fare.

The new schedule of buses will go into effect February 5. Under the new schedule the first and last bus for Long Beach will leave the Beach Drug Company terminal at 6:25 a.m. and 5:50 p.m. The first and last bus for Los Angeles will leave Torrance at 5:45 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. Bound for Hawthorne the first and last run will leave Torrance at 6:30 a.m. and 10 p.m.

### BIKE STRIPPED

Thomas Ellikson told police his bicycle was stolen from his home at 18229 Roslin street last Friday and later found in a vacant lot next door, stripped to the frame.

## COPS NAB EIGHT PHONE VANDALS

Youths Admit to Looting 55 Phones in Area

The capture this week of eight teenage telephone booth wreckers who counted their loot in the hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars, has slowed down the loss of isolated booths in this area, according to Detective Captain Ernie Ashton.

More than 55 of the pay telephones have been torn from booths during the past two months as far east as Hynes and as far north as Inglewood, including eight in the Torrance area.

Seven of the youths, all 17 years old, were students at Narbonne High School, Captain Ashton said. Another, aged 18, lives in Gardena. Four of the youths were already on probation on previous burglary and theft charges.

All are now in Juvenile Hall awaiting arraignment.

Two of the boys were captured by sheriff's deputies from the Firestone station who laid in wait at an isolated telephone booth they felt might be on the marauder's list.

One of the boys, said to be the ringleader, talked freely to police after his capture and described how they fastened tow chains to the telephones and pulled them loose with automobiles. Some of the telephones were pried loose with crowbars. He said the group was not organized as a gang, but after several learned how easy it was to steal the boxes, they told friends and the group grew. He said some nights only one or two telephones were taken. Some nights, as many as 20 telephones were stolen and taken to empty fields where the cash boxes were hammered open. One lad said his share of the loot for one night amounted to almost \$400.

### FOG LIGHTS MISSING

William G. Scholl, 815 Beech street, told police a pair of fog lights were stolen from his car in the parking lot of a local market last Friday.

## Man Escapes As Lighted Heater Ignites Fumes

A narrow escape from a fiery death last night left L. E. Emeyer, a mechanic at the City Maintenance Yard, singing and shuddering as he watched city firemen douse a flash fire in a yard garage that exploded into flames as he mopped the greasy floor with gasoline.

Emeyer said he had been overhauling a bus in the garage and had determined to mop the floor after removing the bus because the grease might harden if he left it until morning.

He said he had forgotten a gas heater in the corner was still burning until the fumes from the gasoline he was spreading from a bucket ignited suddenly in a wall of flame that shut off his vision of the large open garage door which was fortunately open.

With flames from his wet shoes shooting up the inside of his pant legs, he dove by instinct toward the open door and the outdoors beyond where he extinguished the flames on his shoes and raced to a telephone in the yard office to call firemen.

Fast response by the firemen ostensibly saved the structure, although the entire inside of the shop was charred black. City officials said a careful survey will have to be made later to determine whether the old building is still usable.

### Benner Named Acting Chief

Inability of Fire Captain Roy Winters to pass a medical examination this week, prompted the city manager to appoint Captain J. J. Benner as temporary fire chief.

Benner, a fireman of 21 years service with the local department, was appointed by George Stevens, the city manager, to fill the vacancy left by the recent death of Fire Chief John E. McMaster.

Winters, senior captain on the force with 23 years of "call time" and full time tenure to his credit, was recently appointed acting chief but an old injury to his knee disqualified him during the required medical examination.

### Chief Stroh To Address Civic Group

North Torrance residents are invited to attend a regular meeting, to be held by the North Torrance Civic Improvement Association, Wednesday, February 1, at Higgins Brick Patio, 2217 West 174th street at 7:30 p.m. according to Robert Chavez, publicity chairman, Chief of Police John Stroh will be the guest speaker.

Mrs. Alberta Lush and Mrs. Juanita Alford will present a square dance demonstration by the girls and boys club.



FIRE CAPTAIN BENNER ... Acting Chief



FORTY FOOT TREE HITS NURSES' HOME

... "Oooh, Look!" Nurse Bernice Giddings Points Out To Agnes Thompson, "You Can See Right Under The Sidewalk!" —Herald photo.

### Humane Society To Round Up Stray Canines

A drive will be started next week to round-up the packs of dogs running loose in this area that are endangering the welfare of local children, Ralph Blom, Humane Officer for the South Bay Humane Society, said.

He said the regular staff of three men is unable to cope with the increasing numbers of dogs allowed to run loose and mothers' complaints of their children being bitten by the dogs has prompted the addition of two men to aid in the drive.

Blom said all dogs found running loose will be picked up and their owners cited into city court where jail sentences and fines of \$5 to \$300 will be levied upon conviction.

### Firemen Sell Most Tickets

Although Torrance sold the most tickets in the recent six-city sponsored firemen's polo benefit ball, Hermosa won the trophy for most tickets sold on a per capita basis, Engineer Walter West, Torrance Fire Department, ticket chairman announced.

Torrance firemen sold 1391 tickets at \$1 each or one ticket for every 15.8 persons in Torrance, and Hermosa firemen sold 901 tickets, one for every 13.33 persons in Hermosa Beach. Total sales for the ball, held at Redondo Barn January 19, were \$5296 beside ticket sales of \$542 at the door which were expected to pay expenses including music provided by Spade Cooley's western dance band.

### Cops Make Light Of "Prowler"

It looked just like someone was standing in her garage smoking a cigaret and staring at her, Betty Dixon told police last Friday night.

Officers quickly surrounded her home at 1849 Middlebrook road and crept up to the garage. One officer shushed his companions and readied his gun when he, too, saw the gleam. The gleam was steady—a little too steady, he crept, closer.

Still ready with his gun, he crept even closer, then relaxed and turned a sour look on the frightened Betty Dixon. It was a small night light she had forgotten.

## Gale Sends Tree Crashing Into Nurses' Quarters

Snapping before the force of a 40-mile an hour chill wind, a giant acacia tree crashed into the Torrance Memorial Hospital Nurses' Home Tuesday afternoon.

Damage to the building, located at 1416 Cota avenue, was limited to a broken roof tile which broke loose as workmen pulled the 40-foot black acacia tree away from the front of the nurses' home.

The freak wind that blew in from Alaska Tuesday afternoon, dipped into Torrance from its normal altitude of 8000 feet following the foggiest of the previous week, blew down at least six trees, broke a window, cleared dead limbs from other trees and covered the town with a fine layer of Redondo sand.

Agnes Thompson, a nurse who lives at the home, said she was in the first floor living room when she heard a tremendous thud and felt the two-story house shudder. She said she thought an earthquake had struck the house.

The room darkened at the same time as the heavy foliage of the tree smothered the front of the home and when she rushed to the door, the limbs of the tree crowding into the entrance stopped her.

Outside, she found the tree had broken only a roof tile where it struck the house, but the snapping of the brittle roots of the tree had torn up more than 20 feet of the sidewalk and more than 50 square feet of lawn as it toppled.

Fast work by City Park Maintenance men Howard Webb and Tom Mann, who climbed the diagonal tree trunk to cut off

## Herald Judged Fifth Best Weekly In State

An honorable mention was accorded the Torrance Herald for General Excellence at the 62nd Annual Convention of the California Newspaper Publishers Association held in Coronado last Saturday.

The Herald, in competition with 45 other weeklies entered in the annual contest, actually placed fifth in the state for all-round merit.

Announcement of the award was made at the Awards Luncheon held in the Hotel Del Coronado on Coronado Island, during which the state's best newspapers, both daily and weekly, were honored for their accomplishments during the past year.

The general excellence division among the state's weekly newspapers was won by the Covina Argus-Citizen with the La Jolla Light and the Exeter Sun placing second and third respectively.

The Ledger-Gazette of Lancaster and the Torrance Herald received second and third place honorable mention.

## Man Takes .38 Slug In Hip

A shooting, thought first to be "accidental" developed into a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to commit murder, Los Angeles Harbor police disclosed Monday.

Held on suspicion in the San Pedro jail is Harold L. Weaver, 35, of 22410 South Normandie avenue.

The shooting, claimed Harbor detectives, occurred at Gordo's Drive-in at 1500 West Carson street and wounded 21-year-old James Cullinan, of 1662 West 214th street. Cullinan took a .38 caliber slug in the hip, the detectives said. He was treated at the Harbor General Hospital and later transferred to the Torrance Memorial Hospital.

Police investigating a report that Cullinan had been shot accidentally learned that the youth and Weaver's divorced wife had entered the cafe at 11:35 a.m. Monday and were confronted by Weaver who was wielding the gun. During a struggle which ensued, Cullinan was shot in the thigh.

Mrs. Clorine Weaver and her husband, divorced two years ago, were said to be the owners of the drive-in where the shooting took place.



JAMES CULLINAN ... He's Lucky In Shooting Ruckus