

# Six-Year-Old Pulls Sister From Unfenced Oil Sump

# HOME FIRE CLAIMS LIVES OF TWO MEN

## Fencing Of Sump Ordered

Heroic efforts of a six-year old lad was being hailed here yesterday after the boy saved his 2-year old sister from a certain death in an unfenced oil sump near 229th St. and Arlington Ave.

Saved from the gooey mire near a Shamlin well, was Jackie Fomelli, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Fomelli, of 22011 Narbonne Ave. Her brother, Mickey, pulled her from the deep sump behind their home seconds after she tumbled headlong into the pit.

After her brother raced her to the house 200 yards away, the little girl was taken to a physician where she was found to have suffered only chemical



(Herald Photo) JACKIE FOMELLI ... Snatched from Death

burns about the scalp and face. Following treatment, she was released.

A tanker pulled onto the site yesterday morning and began filling the sump.

James Use, Investigator George Powell said yesterday that he would recommend an immediate "get tough" policy to the City Council on the matter of fencing such sumps.

He has ordered a survey made of the entire Torrance field to spot all of the sumps to enable investigators to check on the fencing. He ordered that a fence be erected at that sump yesterday afternoon.

"Strangely, one of our problems is the mobility of sumps," Powell said. "What is a dry hole today may be a sump tomorrow," he explained. The sticky, black goo is transferred from sump to sump, and no facilities are available to dispose of the stuff in this area. James Fomelli, father of the two children, said he would demand that the city clean up the sump mess which prevails throughout the oil field area. He plans to address a special communication on the matter to the City Council today.

## Schools to Seek Change for El Nido

An effort will be made to get a petition from homeowners in the much discussed El Nido tract recently annexed to Redondo Beach to request that their children also go to school in that city, the Torrance School Board was told Tuesday.

The territory was annexed by Redondo Beach, but remains in the Torrance School District. Although only six voters now live in the area, housing for several hundred additional families are expected to be occupied by April.

As soon as ten persons can be found to sign petitions asking that the school district be changed to the Redondo jurisdiction, the matter will be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

The Torrance School Board has sought unsuccessfully to have the territory included in the Redondo School District, but the Redondo board has been unwilling to accept it.

## Home-Garden Eye in Herald

This today's issue, a Home and Garden page is being inaugurated in the HERALD. This weekly feature, on page 29, will include information of general interest to gardeners and homeowners.

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## Local Merchants Name 17 to New Directorships

Members of the Retail Merchants Division of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce named a 17-man board of directors yesterday and announced plans to inaugurate a vigorous promotion of downtown Torrance as a shopping area.

Regular meetings of the merchants will be held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month in the Chamber of Commerce building, it was decided at yesterday's meeting. Officers of the group will be chosen from the board of directors at a meeting of the group in the near future. Among those to be chosen are a president, vice-president, and treasurer.

Named to the new board of directors yesterday were Paul Diamond of the Gay Shop, Abe Robinson, Lawson's Jeweler; Sam Levy, Levy's Department Store; Harry Petro, McCown Drugs; Herb Cohn, Torrance Men's Shop; Maurice Hatten, Baker's Restaurant; Orville Trumblood, McMahan's Furniture; J. H. Page, Newberry's; Joe Doss, Food King Market; Milt Isbell, Liberty Home Appliance; Ed Maulding, Goodyear Service Store; Oscar Maple, Oscar Maples Ford; Carl Duncan, Trend O' Fashion; James Squire, Squire's Style Shop; Ben Smith, Torrance Cycle and Sport Shop; T. Quiring, Roth's Market; and Ken Ruffel, Ken's Shoe Repair.



DO YOU REMEMBER? ... Police Chief Willard Haslam points to Sgt. Bill Evans' picture as he looked in 1937, while Evans points to Haslam's picture, both started on the Torrance Police force 20 years ago, and Evans retired Tuesday. The first head of the traffic division of the local police, Evans has seen police problems multiply as the city grew from some 2500 when he started to its present 57,000.

## Evans Retires After 20 Years on Police Force

Bill Evans retired Tuesday after more than 20 years on the Torrance Police Force. It wasn't just the ordinary retirement of an ordinary cop, because he isn't just an ordinary flatfoot.

He's 65, but he doesn't look it. He never finished high school, but many college graduates would be hard put to keep up with him.

He can be plenty tough when he has to be, but in his spare time, he writes poetry.

He has been a policeman for 20 years, but before that he did everything from prizefighting to selling insurance.

"I've hob-nobbed with everybody from guttersnipes to the 400," he noted. "I've gotten along with all of them. It's been an interesting life."

Second in Service. Only one man—Capt. Ernie Ashton—has been with the Torrance Police longer. Evans, Police Chief Willard H. Haslam, and Sgt. Percy Bennett all joined the force on the same day in November, 1934.

Things haven't been too exciting on the police force, Evans noted, but it has been interesting.

One of the most exciting and embarrassing moments for Evans came when he and Ashton were chasing some burglars down the street in a police car. Firing at the car ahead of them, Evans' hand was jolted, and he put a hole through a nearby house, narrowly missing a sleeping baby. They did catch the burglars however.

He has never had to deliver a baby in his duties, although he noted, "I came close a couple of times."

Wrote Poetry. An avid reader, he amused himself by writing verse.

One of them was published in a national magazine several years ago.

His writings run from the comic to the serious. In "Ode to a Detective," he said:

"Singly, but with dogged patience, trailing grimly every clue.

"Daunted not by meager detail till at last his task was through.

Pride of conquest, laurels gathered, reeked he not of one of these.

But the story, if you ask me, has the stench of moldy cheese."

One of Evans' favorites is a piece called, "The Vagrant Breeze."

"I caught the whim of a vagrant breeze, And followed onward through the trees.

On tireless feet my spirit

## Answer Delayed Annexation Bid

Official decision on the proposal to annex a huge section of the Palos Verdes Hills to Torrance was delayed at least a month Tuesday night when City Attorney James M. Hall presented a resolution required by the Government Code to the City Council and set an official public hearing date on the matter for Tuesday evening, April 5.

A previously scheduled informal hearing, which was set for Monday evening, March 7, will be held as planned, the Council decided. Although no formal action can be taken, the hearing will enable Councilmen to learn the views of Torrance residents.

In a prepared statement released this week by Palos Verdes officials, it was stated that a petition for annexation of a portion of the Chadwick School area and a connecting shopping strip to the city of Palos Verdes Estates had been filed at 11:50 a.m. last Wednesday. The HERALD learned from unofficial sources that such a petition had been filed with the Palos Verdes City Council at 7:58 p.m. Wednesday.

Petition Redrawn. It was later reported that the petition filed earlier in the day did not meet with the approval of the County Board of Commissioners and that an amended petition was prepared and submitted to the Council.

Proposed for annexation to Palos Verdes, which would cut off the huge Great Lakes Carbon Corp. area from the city will be granted time to do so at the public hearing next Monday evening at 8 o'clock in the City Hall.

Twenty acres of the proposed annexation parcel which Palos Verdes officials are considering is contained in a narrow strip about 200 feet wide running north and south along the Chadwick School property.

Another 36 acres is in a triangular piece of ground adjacent to the Palos Verdes Estates boundary. Joining the two areas, according to reliable sources, would be a strip of land 208 feet wide and about one and one-half miles long which cuts across the Great Lakes Carbon Corp. property.

If annexed to Palos Verdes as proposed, it would cut off any possible annexation of the huge peninsula area to Torrance.

In the meantime, a committee of the Torrance Council of Parents and Teachers reiterated their recommendation that the city require the property holders to donate all needed school sites at no cost to the city.

## Judge Halves Sentence for Sake of Baby

A young prospective mother's tears softened the heart of Superior Court Judge Joseph M. Malby so much that he reduced her sentence for forgery from six to three months in Long Beach Tuesday.

Mrs. Barbara Kay Jefferson, 21, of 2667 W. Carson, was first sentenced to six months in County Jail, but while awaiting transportation to the jail went bitterly while another trial was in progress.

An hour later, Judge Malby interrupted the trial in progress to tell her:

"I'm going to reduce your sentence to three months but not because of you, I just don't want that baby to have the stigma of being born while you're in custody."

Judge Malby said his original sentence was made because Mrs. Jefferson had "consistently and persistently" lied to her probation officers about her checks. Her tears finally moved him to reconsider for the baby's sake, he said.

## Crash Victim Unconscious For 2nd Week

Charles Slatten, 16-year-old Torrance High School youth hurt two weeks ago when the car in which he was riding crashed into a truck, was reported still unconscious and still critical at Centinela Valley Hospital yesterday.

His condition was reported "slightly improved." He was hurt in a Feb. 16 crash which took the lives of four other teenagers, including another Torrance youth, Harold Singleton, 15.

Two other crash victims, Richard Weber, 17, of 3424 W. 178th St., and Dorothy Young, of Lawndale, were released from the hospital this week. Both were less seriously injured than Slatten.

## Lamp Is Cause Of Tragedy

Two men, a dog, and two puppies were burned to death Tuesday night as fire swept through an old house in the 5300 block on Del Amo Blvd.

Sheriff's Deputies from the arson squad declared that the fire which killed Luis Cisneros, 40, of 4604 Del Amo, and Ernie Vargas, 60, apparently started when a kerosene lamp overturned.

Deputies also questioned three other men at the scene who identified the bodies. They were Fernando Augustin Duarte, 64, of Redondo Beach; Theodore Gonzales, 55, of Venice; and Jovito G. Parris, 50, of Venice. The deputies had to speak to them through an interpreter.

Complete details were not available, but indications were that the men had been drinking, deputies said, and that the fire had begun near an iron bed, where the kerosene lamp overturned.

The charred remains of the two men and the dogs were found huddled against a wall, surrounded by bedclothes.

Neighbors said that the place was lit by kerosene lamps, since there was no electricity. The bodies were taken to Stone and Myers Mortuary.

## February Slow, But Building Ahead of 1954

February was a slower month than usual as far as building in Torrance went, but the year's total is still ahead of the record-breaking pace set in 1954.

During February, Senior Clerk Walter Bradford of the City Engineer's office reported that \$1,563,203 in building permits was issued, bringing the year's total to \$5,877,478.

Last year, \$2,022,676 in two-month total of \$4,320,644.

During the month, permits for 69 houses, one duplex, five apartments, three commercial buildings, and two industrial buildings were given.

The Clydesbank Co. took out permits for nine houses valued at \$90,000 in the 2200 and 2300 blocks of 178th St., while Western Air Compression Corp. got a permit for a \$41,000 industrial building at 2002 W. 174th St.

A total of 391 permits were issued during February.

## Mayor Hits Three-Lane Roadways

A plea that Torrance eliminate all three-lane roadways within the city by reducing them to two-lane streets was voiced at the City Council meeting Tuesday evening by Mayor Nicholas O. Drake.

Referring to a recent collision on Rosencrans Ave. which snuffed out the lives of four teenagers, Mayor Drake said he thought the city should do everything possible to eliminate the hazards of three-lane streets.

Councilmen have his suggestions under study.

## Scout Receives Award While in Hospital Bed

Life was brightened a little last night for 13-year-old Daniel Holly, who is recuperating after an attack of sugar diabetes at Harbor General Hospital.

The HERALD carrier boy, son of Mrs. Clois Holly, of 18415 Falda Ave., was presented with his Boy Scout tenderfoot badge at the hospital by Scoutmaster Robert Rogers and Senior Patrol Leader Roger Harris of Troop 951.

He has been active in the Scouts for several months and was scheduled to get his badge Monday night at a court of honor. He was stricken Friday, and was in critical condition over the weekend, but is reported getting better.



FUEL FOR THE BLITZ ... D. M. Sowle (center) presents National Supply Co. check for \$1250 to Mervin M. Schwab (right) as the company's gift to the Red Cross fund campaign which was holding a "Blitz Day" here yesterday. Looking on is Fund Chairman Albert Isen. Schwab is industry chairman for the Red Cross drive.