

Recreation Program Widely Expanded

Total of 635,000 Participated In Dept. Activities Last Year

During the calendar year Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 1957, the Torrance Recreation Department program underwent a great deal of expansion. More schools and parks had a supervised recreation program than ever before and the program, itself, contained a greater number of activities, especially during the summer months.

New programs included dog obedience classes, swim meets, aquacades, field trips, cook-outs, day camping and fun-through-music programs in addition to the usual programs held previously in games, sports, crafts, drama, music, etc.

One of the activities which proved exceedingly popular was the music program which was conducted on each of the park areas.

This led to the Torrance Recreation Department taking over operation of the Torrance Chet Band, co-sponsored by the Torrance Area Youth Bands, Inc. This marching band participated in a number of special events, including the Huntington Beach parade during the fall months.

For those interested in music, modern dance workshops and fun-through-music filled the bill. Participants in both of these activities performed during the Sunday bandshell shows, special area events, the aquacade, and the open house.

Crafts were presented on the

parks and playgrounds and art lessons were offered the children. These art lessons were presented in cooperation with the Torrance Art Group and were conducted by Miss Moni Gillette, noted South Bay artist.

Field trips to nearby plants of interest were particularly popular during the summer months. More than 600 children boarded the "Trip Bus" whose destination varied from Marineland to the Harbor Cruise, Fern Dell Nature Museum, Griffith Park Zoo, and the Observatory.

The camping program was another popular activity during which the children learned basic camp craft skills, including outdoor cooking, pitching tents and nature crafts.

School playgrounds in the spring and winter were opened only during vacation periods and on Saturdays. Afternoon programs on school areas were dropped because of poor participation, which was due to early darkness and double sessions.

Because of this, activities on

the school areas during the time school is in session consist almost exclusively of games, sports and contests. The void in school area programming was compensated by increased hours of operation on the park areas.

Recreation activities on parks during the school year were greatly increased to cover the full scope of recreational programming of activities and events.

Attendance figures at Recreation Department programs increased 150,000 with over 635,000 participating in 1957. The number of areas open for recreation program increased from 19 to 27 with eight new schools being added to the recreation schedule in 1957.

The number of employees rose to a new high of 135, including swimming pool personnel. Of this number, permanent year-round employees increased from eight in 1956 to 10 in 1957. The balance of the staff increase was part-time and seasonal personnel.

Sea-Aire Golf Course, which opened in September, enjoyed ever-increasing participation. Grand total paid admissions was 3370, of which 1342 were youth.

The Victor E. Benstead Plunge,

which opened in April and closed in November, had a total paid admissions of 70,140, of which 63,747 were youth. Of this number, more than 22,000 children were taught how to swim in the organized classes at the pool conducted during the morning hours.

In April, Louis J. Kroeger and Associates completed their recreation survey and submitted a full report on the recreational needs of the City of Torrance. This resulted in a special \$3 million park and recreation bond issue which was placed on the ballot in October but was defeated by a margin of 149 votes.

Negotiations which had been going on with Los Angeles Park and Recreation Department for several years resulted in an increased subsidy for community recreation in Torrance. For the fiscal year 1957-58, the county now contributes \$15,502 as against the \$4822 which had been contributed during the previous years.

New park acquisition included the Guenser Park at 178 st. and Gramercy ave. and Los Arboles Park in upper Hollywood Riviera. Both were formally acquired by the city during the early spring of 1957. Park construction was limited to landscaping, walks and games courts at McMaster Park and some additional protective fencing at the Sea-Aire Golf Course.

Programming for adults of the city increased considerably during the year. Prior to 1957, recreation programs for adults consisted almost entirely of the activities held at the Adult Center at 1318 Cravens ave., where members of the club participate in crafts, cards, shuffleboard and social activities.

Sports leagues for adults, which have always been popular, continued to grow but the enormous expansion occurred in adult clubs chartered by the Park and Recreation Commission.

The group of chartered clubs now includes the Torrance Adult Club, Torrance Art Group, Torrance Riviera Tennis Club, the South Bay Dog Obedience Club, McMaster Mothers Club, Ladies' Golf Club and the Corn Stompers Square Dance Club.

The Torrance Art Group sponsors several art shows each year which attract county-wide interest. The Torrance Riviera Tennis Club sponsors and conducts inter-city leagues and tournaments.

South Bay Dog Obedience Club holds several shows each year in addition to the weekly obedience classes, while the

Ladies Golf Club conducts classes and tournaments. In addition, each one of these adult chartered clubs sponsors and carries on activities for the youth of the city, including dog obedience classes, tennis classes, art classes, and teenage golf classes.

Also, programs for the ladies of the town gained new momentum with the inclusion of tri-monthly home makers forums and crafts workshops. For the nimble footed, bowling, badminton, tennis, and volleyball are featured sports activities.

Outstanding special events of the year consisted of the "pop" concert, featuring the South Bay Symphony Orchestra; the Easter egg hunt sponsored by the Downtown Merchants and the Torrance Adult Club; Mother and Daughter Tea; Water Carnival; original Christmas play; annual open house program, and other holiday events.

Softball League Opener to Be Held May 1

Torrance Recreation Department's 1958 softball season is slated to open play May 1 with two six-pitch games at Torrance Park. A Blue League game featuring Fire Department B, under the management of Gene Langford, tangle with Jim Waters' Torrance Teachers team in the 7:30 opener.

Jack Westergard pits his Columbia Employees Recreation Association 10-man outfit against Hand Behren's Hollywood-Riviera Sportsman's Club in a Black League encounter at 8:30 p.m. The Sportsmen and National Blue teams returning to action after an absence of several years, required the creation of a third league.

Each league consists of six teams. The Service League plays all games on Tuesday nights, using both the Torrance Park and Waleria sites. Opening games in this league are May 6 and have the Optimist Club meeting the Torrance Kiwanis Club in Torrance Park at 8:30 p.m. following a 7 p.m. open Softball League game; and at Waleria, Junior Chamber of Commerce mixes with Rotary in the 7:30 curtain raiser and Waleria Kiwanis vs. Torrance Lions Club at 8:30 p.m.

Other Blue League games are scheduled for Friday, May 2, at Torrance Park, Waleria Business Men's Club vs. National Blues, 7:30 p.m. and Elks Club



SAFETY AWARD — R. E. Lauterbach, right, vice-president and director of manufacturing, General Petroleum Corporation, presents certificate of safety achievement to D. J. MacLaren, laboratory foreman, during recent ceremony at General Petroleum's Torrance refinery. Award was for MacLaren's supervision of 1,000,000 man hours without a loss-time injury.

IN SWIM RECORD

Anita Felix, 6, of Torrance, has equaled the five-year record in the 25-yard backstroke in her age division of the Southern Pacific Association.

The youngster, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Felix, 22305 Ladeene Ave., swam the distance in 22.8 seconds in the Morningside High School pool, Inglewood, last Sunday.

Black League games, scheduled the same night at Waleria are: Fire Department A vs. Local 1135 at 7:30 p.m. and Christian Men vs. North Torrance Lions Club at 8:30 p.m.

General Petroleum Employee Cited for His Safety Record

Donald James MacLaren, foreman of General Petroleum Corporation's Torrance refinery laboratory recently was honored as the first person in the company's history to supervise 1,000,000 man hours without a loss-time injury.

MacLaren, 657 West 119th st., Los Angeles, was presented a certificate of safety achievement by R. E. Lauterbach, vice-president and director of manufacturing. A. E. Thompson, manager of the refinery, also took part in the ceremony. MacLaren's achievement took place over a period of 13 years and is still uninterrupted. He joined General Petroleum in 1938 as a junior laboratory man at Santa Fe Springs. Since March, 1938, he has been employed at the Torrance refinery laboratory. He is a graduate of the University of California, in 1927.

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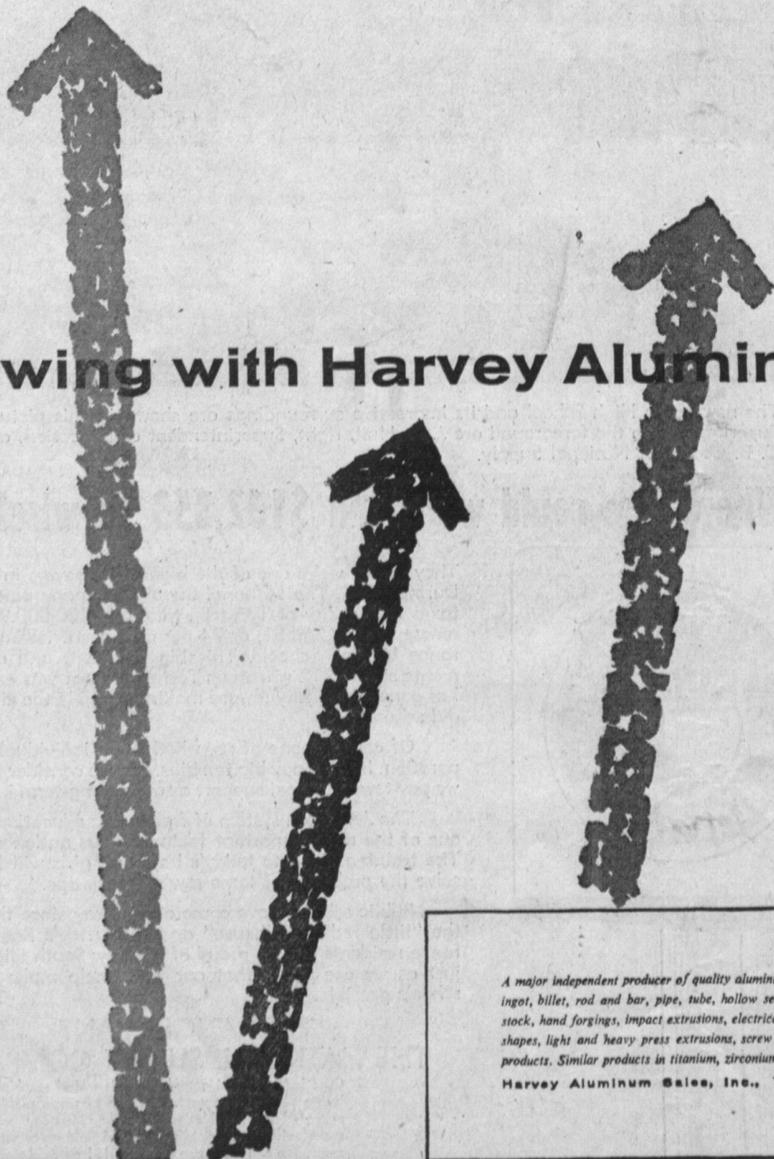
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