

City a Lucrative Place for Car Thieves

Torrance

Press-Herald

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INSIDE TODAY
Adeline Daley B-2 Restaurants E-6
Ann Landers C-1 Sports C-8
Editorials C-2 Women's News B-1
Obituaries D-2 Want Ads D-3

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Teachers Keep Walking In Dispute With Board

Third Parade Slated

By HENRY BURKE
Press-Herald Staff Writer
North High School Back-to-School Night is the third target of the Torrance Education Association protest rally tonight at 8:45 p.m. Teachers are expected to parade along campus sidewalks for an hour.

About 70 faculty members were at West High last evening to display signs and distribute leaflets protesting policies of the board of trustees. The first parade was last week at South High.

Without referring directly to the current organized teacher parades, members of the Torrance board of trustees believe this type of function is "moving in the wrong direction."

COMMENT by the five trustees was touched off at Monday's board meeting following a report of a negotiating council meeting last Thursday. Dr. J. H. Hull, superintendent of schools, said the council meeting was called to discuss seven items on an agenda.

The first two items were: "How can we improve communications between the board and the negotiating council?"

"Do we want to establish the negotiating council as the sole representative of all certified personnel for all matters relating to employment conditions? If this is done, will other organizations communicate directly with the board in board meetings as representing organizations?"

FAILURE to arrive at a conclusion on these two items stalled the other five more specific measures dealing with department chairmen, grievance procedure policy, salary cost considerations, and related matters.

School board member Bill Hanson reacted to the negotiation squabble by pointing out to TEA representatives, "... 21 times we listened to you. It is your desire which isn't being achieved. It is not a matter of communication, but getting with your ideas. Board Chairman Bert Lynn (See TEACHERS, Page A-2)



EARLY START... Getting an early start on the Torrance Family YMCA's annual Navaho Navaho Project are (from left) Gerrie Cunningham, Nancy Graham, and Nancy Nagraham. The three women, who are heading the drive for warm clothes, toys, canned foods, and medical supplies, report a caravan will leave the YMCA during the Christmas vacation from school to deliver the badly needed items to Navaho Indians in Northern Arizona. Individuals and community groups may deliver their contributions to the YMCA beginning Nov. 21. During Halloween, trick or treat callers will distribute information about the project to Torrance residents. (Press-Herald Photo)

Murder Charge Filed

Young Cyclist Dies in Crash

A 29-year-old Gardena man was charged with murder in Los Angeles Municipal Court Tuesday in connection with the death Sunday of a 21-year-old Torrance motorcyclist.

Eugene Franklin Jones, of 17408 Scudder Court, Gardena, was arraigned in Division 40 of the Los Angeles Municipal Court. He also was charged with felony hit and run driving.

Jones was returned to custody in lieu of bail.

HE IS charged with the death of Ted Vivonia, of 3111 W. 180th St., who was run down Sunday afternoon on the Harbor Freeway.

Los Angeles police said Jones has admitted driving the car which struck Vivonia.

Jones' brother, Jesse Jones, 23, was arrested Sunday evening after police, using the license number of the abandoned vehicle, traced the two men to their Gardena home. Jesse Jones was released Tuesday, police said. He will not be charged in the incident, it was reported.

VIVONIA, who was riding his motorcycle near 117th Street on the Harbor Freeway, was dead on arrival at Gardena Hospital.

Witnesses to the incident said it appeared that Jones, following a right-of-way dispute with Vivonia, deliberately ran down Vivonia and then tried to ram a second motorcycle carrying two of the dead man's friends.

The two friends, Stanley Warner, 21, and Stephen Dralle, also 21, were injured.

An unidentified motorist blocked a freeway off-ramp when Jones tried to leave the scene. He, his brother, and a reported third occupant of the car fled the area on foot.



WHAT TO DO?... Displaying two of the signs that tell of grievances between the Torrance Education Association and the board of trustees are (left to right) Neell Marble, executive director of the group; Lois Boston, a teacher at Madrona School; and Keith Weideman, president. The second of three marches took place at West High School last night and will be repeated this evening at the North High School Back-to-School-Night. (Press-Herald Photo)

Most Stolen Cars Found Quickly by Detectives

By NATALIE HALL
Press-Herald Staff Writer

Quick action on the part of Torrance police officers recently sent a car thief to jail and returned the stolen vehicle to its owner minutes after it was taken.

The dramatic recovery occurred when a Torrance woman put through an emergency call to police reporting that a man was driving off with her automobile. Police dispatchers had units heading for the vicinity in seconds.

The car thief was apprehended as he turned onto Hawthorne Boulevard, just blocks from the scene of the crime.

There are several such cases of "instant recovery" in the car theft files of the Torrance Police Department but unfortunately they are the exception.

THE TORRANCE police detectives assigned to the car theft detail, Don Feil and James Papp, are kept busy tracing the hundreds of vehicles stolen annually in this city. Between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30 of this year, 476 cars (nearly two per day) disappeared.

Eighty-eight motorcycles were also stolen during this time. Most people who discover their cars missing can expect to have them returned, Detectives Feil and Papp explained. Of the 476 cars, all but 43 have been found — in one condition or another. Most were intact, with only minor damage or stripping. Others had been completely picked bare of motor, wheels, and other valuable parts.

Some of these cars, of course, will never be recovered.

MOTORCYCLE owners can't expect the same luck when their vehicles are stolen. Detectives Feil and Papp stated that of the 88 cycles reported missing in Torrance, only 44 have been returned — that's just half.

Detective Papp noted that "specialty cars" with high performance equipment are the most vulnerable. "If someone's '68 Chevy is stolen, you can be pretty sure it's a joyride case," he said, "but when a late model specialty car disappears, it's almost always for parts."

Volkswagens, the detectives noted, have become a major theft problem in recent years. They are frequently stripped to be made into "dune buggies," a type of vehicle popular among hobbyists for carting across desert sands.

TORRANCE police track down the largest percentage of stolen cars within 24 hours after they're taken, but a few of these vehicles turn up three years or more after they disappear.

Usually, "hot" cars are found parked or abandoned. Police are often able to spot cars that look out of place in a particular neighborhood.

A great many stolen vehicles are recovered by sharp-eyed patrol officers whose routine procedure it is to check the licenses of all cars they stop for traffic offenses. First they compare the license with those listed on the "hot

DRIVER DIES IN FIRE

Gas Tanker Explosion Wrecks Freeway Tunnel

A tunnel at the San Diego Harbor Freeway interchange will have to be rebuilt — at a cost of \$250,000 to \$300,000 — as a result of a gasoline explosion which killed one person and severely damaged the structure Sunday.

Temporary repairs on the tunnel are expected to be completed tomorrow or Friday, the State Division of Highways told the Press-Herald.

The tunnel has been closed and traffic on the San Diego Freeway restricted since a gasoline tanker hit a guard rail Sunday evening and exploded into flames.

KILLED in the mishap was William Wingerath, 26, of La Puente, the driver of the tanker. Wingerath was driving the tanker along the transition road from the southbound Harbor Freeway to the eastbound San Diego Freeway when he apparently lost control of the vehicle.

Milton Stark of the State Division of Highways told the Press-Herald yesterday emergency state crews were working with Guy F. Atkinson Co. crews to complete temporary repairs.

Once the repairs have been made, all lanes of the San Diego Freeway, as well as the transition road, will be opened to traffic. Vehicles now are restricted to two lanes on the southbound San Diego Freeway.

STARK SAID the tunnel and roadway which it supports were "severely damaged by intense heat — both the concrete shell and the reinforcing steel." Fencing, guard rails, storm drains, lights, and the road surface will have to be reconstructed, he added.

Actual construction may take up to six months, Stark said. A contract will be awarded following competitive bidding, he reported.

Traffic on the Harbor Freeway is not affected at the present time, Stark said, except for the closure of the transition road, due to be reopened by Friday.



GAAAAARR!... Torrance resident Gordon Akers wandered through the Press-Herald offices Tuesday complaining about the heat. Akers, in fact, said he felt like he was melting and — with a little help from staff photographer Hal Fisher — he looks that way. Temperatures have soared to near the 100-degree mark in the current heat wave. (Press-Herald Photo)

Witches' Supply House Robbed and Ransacked

The witchcraft business in Torrance suffered a major setback over the weekend when burglars ransacked and robbed The Spell, a shop dealing in paraphernalia for the occult arts, hypnotism, and astrology.

Estimated total loss is between \$6,000 and \$8,000. A paperboy discovered the mess Sunday morning and called Torrance police to the scene, 3855 Pacific Coast Hwy., unit 5.

Co-owner Phyllis Taylor, 24706 Via Valmonte, told police that the burglars escaped with furniture, hundreds of books on the occult

arts, thousands of candles, jewelry boxes, incense perfume and dozens of other items. The take included nearly the entire inventory of the store.

After removing the merchandise, the burglar, or burglars-poured buckets of red paint on rugs and the floor, completely covering a large zodiac design. A can of black spray paint was used to write curses all over the walls and floor.

Mrs. Taylor told police she believes the damage was done by a former employee, who sought revenge against the store management.

Stabbing Suspect Guilty

A 24-year-old Torrance man was convicted Monday of assault with a deadly weapon in connection with the stabbing of a former roommate last July 3. Jerry Wayne Tatum, of 1830 Torrance Blvd., was ordered by Superior Court Judge Allen Miller to return Nov. 17 for sentencing. Judge Miller rendered his verdict Monday after studying testimony given at a preliminary hearing by the victim, Gary R. Pappas, 21. Tatum was released on his own recognizance pending the Nov. 17 sentencing.

Burn Victim Serious

Mrs. Tyra Sedacca, severely burned in a San Diego Freeway crash which killed her husband and two children, remains in serious condition at Harbor General Hospital, the Press-Herald was told early today. Mrs. Sedacca was riding in a car driven by her husband last Wednesday when the five-car crash, triggered by a youth running across the freeway, occurred. Talissa Sedacca, 4, became the fourth victim of the crash Saturday when she died about 11:20 a.m. A 3-month-old baby, Kedrin, was killed Wednesday and Irwin Sedacca died last Thursday as a result of burns sustained in the crash.