

# Planners Reject WALTERIA Dump Proposal

Torrance

## Press-Herald

TO CALL US

Circulation Office ..... DA 5-1515  
Advertising ..... DA 5-6060  
Women's News ..... DA 5-6380  
News Department ..... DA 5-6060

INSIDE TODAY

Ann Landers . . . A-5 PTA News . . . . . B-2  
Crossword . . . . . A-5 Sports . . . . . B-3  
Editorials . . . . . A-4 Women's News . . . B-1  
Obituaries . . . . . A-2 Want Ads . . . . . B-5

Published semi-weekly Wednesday and Sunday by King Williams Press, Inc. Entered as second class matter January 30, 1914, at Post Office, Torrance, California, Under act of March 3, 1879

Series II, Volume IV, Number 73

★ ★

3238 Sepulveda Blvd., Torrance, California — Sunday, March 10, 1968

By Carrier 50c Per Month  
By Mail, \$18 Per Year

10c Per Copy

14 PAGES

# Jury Gives O'Brien Death Penalty

## Commission Votes To Deny Dump Plan

By NATALIE HALL  
Press-Herald Staff Writer  
Walteria homeowners Wednesday night won a major round in their battle to keep a garbage dump out of their backyards. More than 200 south Torrance residents turned out to see the city's Planning Commission reject a plan to allow an 85-acre land fill dump to be operated adjacent to their homes.

The proposed dump site is located between Crenshaw Boulevard and Madison Street, south of Winlock Road near the Torrance city limit. This is the second time within two years that owners of the sand and gravel quarry have sought a zoning variance for the site, claiming that a land fill operation is the only way to reclaim the area for other uses. The first request

was turned down Feb. 28, 1967.

The quarry is presently zoned for single family residences.

Planning Commissioners voted 6-0 to deny the petition for variance after a two-hour hearing. Commissioner James A. Armstrong abstained.

Final word on the proposed dump site must come from the Torrance City Council, slated to tackle the question in about one month.

Wednesday night's hearing opened with testimony from Richard del Guercio, attorney for the quarry's owners, Mrs. K. Sande Senness, Peter del Re, and Agnes del Re.

Del Guercio said that the proposed land fill operation would be "carried on with the least detriment to the surrounding area," stating that the land fill method of rubbish disposal was "scientifically sound."

The attorney pointed out that Los Angeles County operates two similar dumps immediately west of the quarry site in the city of Rolling Hills. He termed the Rolling Hills operations "nuisance free."

Dr. Richard Pomeroy of the Pasadena consulting firm Pomeroy, Johnston, and Bailey, spoke next, explaining that rubbish dumped at the proposed land fill would be covered over every day. Dr. Pomeroy, hired as a consultant by dump proponents, said he holds a Ph.D. in chemistry from Cal Tech, specializing in water supply and waste disposal.

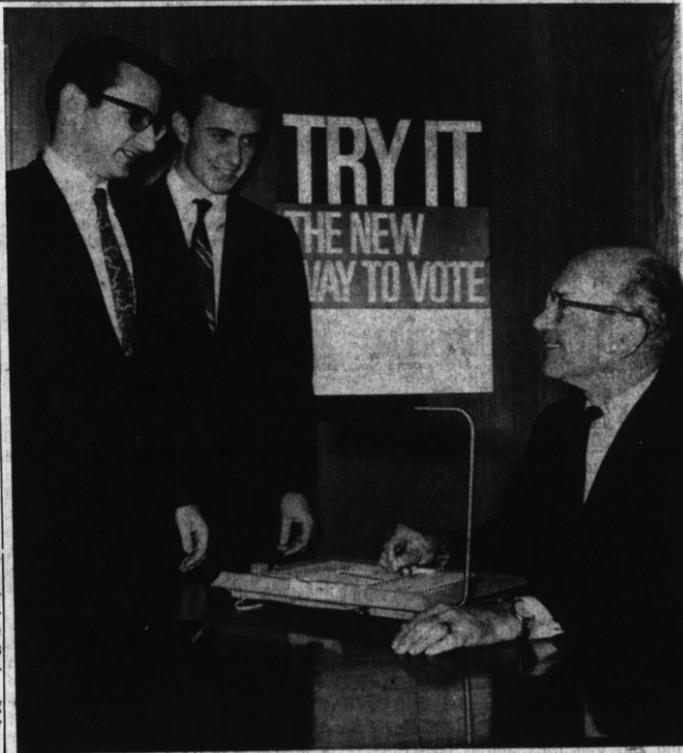
Since no garbage or rubbish would be left exposed at the end of a day, Dr. Pomeroy stated, many of the ills of ordinary dumps would be

avoided. Rats would have no place to nest or rummage for food and flies would have no place to breed. Dust would be kept down through a wetting process, he said, and there would be little odor other than the smell of wet paper which doesn't carry outside the dump area.

Dr. Pomeroy also claimed that residents would not be bothered by noise or an unsightly view because of a natural barrier between homes and the dump site.

The chemist conceded that combustible methane gas might be produced during the early years of the fill, but denied that the gas would disturb Walteria residents. There is little or no methane gas from the county dumps nearby, he said.

Pomeroy told Planning Commissioners not to worry (See DUMP, Page A-2)



COMMUNITY SURVEY . . . Using the new IBM Votomatic device which Torrance voters will use April 9, Mayor Albert Isen completes his ballot in a community survey being conducted by the Torrance Jaycees. The survey, to be conducted throughout March, is designed to stimulate interest in city government and acquaint voters with the new voting machine. Waiting for Isen to complete his ballot are Gerald Tarlow and Donald W. Lee, co-chairmen of the Jaycee project. Community organizations will participate in the survey and the voting machines will be located at shopping centers and at city hall. (Press-Herald Photo)

## Truck Hits Power Pole; Youth Hurt

A Torrance youth is in good condition at Little Company of Mary Hospital today after he was knocked unconscious in a traffic mishap early Friday morning.

Harry Loupas Jr., 20, of 20907 Amie Ave., Space 8, apparently lost control of his truck and ran into a utility pole near the corner of Crenshaw Boulevard and 190th Street, police said.

The accident occurred about 3 a.m. as Loupas was headed south on Crenshaw Boulevard. Witnesses said it was raining when the Loupas vehicle hit the pole.

## \$2 Million in Renewal Funds Advanced to City

The Torrance Redevelopment Agency has now received 75 per cent of loan funds due from the federal government for the Meadow Park urban renewal project. Agency director Lawrence Irwin said the latest installment on the loan—amounting

to \$2,389,000—was received in Torrance Friday. Total amount of the federal loan is \$6½ million.

Irwin said the money will be used to acquire more property from home and business owners in the Meadow Park area, a 56-acre site just west of the Torrance Municipal Airport.

So far, Irwin said, the Redevelopment Agency has acquired 72 per cent of the property. Fourteen families, three businesses, and one individual have been relocated.

The agency last week awarded the first contract to a demolition firm to raze five houses in the renewal area.

Irwin said that the agency hopes to have the site completely clear 12 months from now so that plans for improvement projects may proceed. Some 150,000 cubic yards of fill will be required to raise the level of the area so that flooding will no longer be a problem. Streets, curbs, and drains will also be installed. Utilities will be placed underground.

Slated to rise on the site is an airport-oriented, light industrial park. There will be taxiways running into the project so that planes may go directly from the runway to a company's loading platform.

## BUILDING PERMITS

### Two-Month Total Tops \$6 Million

Total valuation of building permits issued in Torrance during the month of February shows a slight decline from the valuation of those issued during the same month last year.

This year's building permit record shows that although 220 permits were issued, the total valuation of the structures to be built only amounts to \$1,213,240.

In February, 1967, however, 202 new permits were issued at a valuation of \$1,239,705.

FIGURES FOR the two-month period of January-February for the two years are as follows:

• 1967—403 permits, \$3,596,420 valuation.  
• 1968—397 permits, \$6,123,975 valuation.

The two-month figure for

this year is high due to large valuations on single dwelling and apartment permits issued in January.

The permit of largest valuation issued this February went to the R. A. Watt Co., 22940 Maple Ave., for the construction of a \$174,110 12-unit apartment. An \$81,400 permit was also issued to the First Four Square Church, 2150 Sepulveda Blvd., for a classroom and office building.

THE PERMIT record shows that a veterinary hospital with a caretakers' apartment above will rise at 23500 Hawthorne Blvd., to the tune of \$41,000.

Corsaro Distributing Co., 2740 California St., will construct a \$120,000 office and warehouse, while Dow Chemical Co. was issued a permit to build a \$31,740 distribution office.

## March 29 Date Set by Judge For Sentencing

By HENRY BURKE  
Press-Herald Staff Writer  
A North Hollywood man—Jerry Lee O'Brien—was given a death sentence Friday in Superior Court for the Aug. 10 killing of a Torrance police officer.

The jury which took one hour to find O'Brien guilty of the crime deliberated more than 67 hours before recommending the death penalty.

Judge Burch Donahue set formal sentencing for March 29. The condemned 34-year-old O'Brien robbed the Foods Company Market at Artesia and Crenshaw boulevards of more than \$10,000 on the morning of Aug. 10 and in the process of leaving the store he was confronted by Officer David N. Seibert who had been summoned.

When Seibert drew his gun, he was shot four times by O'Brien. Three shots were determined as fatal.

Prosecuting Attorney Robert Burnett paraded 29 "eye" witnesses into the courtroom to testify against O'Brien.

The felony robbery and killing resulted in a first degree murder conviction.

FOR THE PENALTY phase of the trial, Judge Donahue instructed the jury of seven men and five women that the decision must be at their "absolute discretion."

When the verdict was rendered by Clerk of the Court Alberta Vettes at 9:46 a.m. Friday, O'Brien did not stir. After the jurors were polled one by one and the verdict was ascertained, they were excused from further jury duty by Judge Donahue. Besides the 12 who handed down the verdict, there was one alternate seated.

Sitting to the right of public defender Bud Calof, O'Brien broke a silence by speaking to his counsel. It is understood he thanked Calof and said he did a good job handling the case.

Eight spectators heard the verdict, including Bettye O'Brien, the defendant's 69-year-old mother.

She remained calm until her son stood and was escorted back to a cell in an adjacent room. For the first time, he did not turn and nod to her before leaving. She

broke into a sob. After O'Brien was out of the room, Calof sat with the mother.

Jury foreman James Ainsworth said nine ballots were taken during the two and one-half days of deliberation.

ACCOUNTS given by others on the panel recall the first ballot found four for the death penalty, six for life in prison, and two undecided.

Late Wednesday the jury requested additional instructions from Judge Donahue. He returned them to the courtroom Thursday morning and restated original instructions which require "absolute discretion" in a first degree conviction.

After a 10-2 ballot for the death penalty was broken on the eighth round, the required unanimous vote followed almost immediately.

A juror who said he was the final "holdout" appeared convinced the jury acted properly.

JUDGE DONAHUE, commenting in his chamber, said the manner in which the jury deliberated is a "credit to the system."

He also acknowledged the work of the public defender. "O'Brien was well represented by Calof," the judge said.

The prosecution was handled by Deputy District Attorney Robert Burnett.

Although Burnett was successful in obtaining a death penalty against O'Brien, he was solemn when he walked out of the court room.

## West High Names Top Homemaker

Anne Marielli has been selected as the 1968 Homemaker of Tomorrow at West High School. She is now eligible to compete for state and national honors and scholarships.

In addition to cooking and sewing, Miss Marielli is interested in music, modern dance, and ballet.

Her other activities include membership in the Future Teachers Club and accompanying a children's singing group.

## 3.35 Inches of Rain Fall . . .

A furious and unexpected storm which hit the Southland Thursday afternoon dropped 3.35 inches of rain on Torrance, according to reports from the U. S. Weather Bureau. The rain raised to 10.92 inches the total for the season. Last year at this time, some 14.03 inches of rain had been recorded in the city. No major damage was reported, although there was some flooding in streets and intersections throughout the city.

## Marine Dies in Vietnam . . .

Latest Torrance casualty in the Vietnam War is Pfc. James C. McPhearson, husband of Mrs. James C. McPhearson, 22929 S. Anza Ave. Pentagon sources said late Tuesday that the Marine died from "non-hostile" causes.

## Special Meeting Called . . .

The board of trustees of the Torrance Unified School District will hold a special meeting at the service center Monday at 4:30 p.m. Consideration will be given to the Torrance Education Association salary package for the 1968-69 school year. The trustees met only once in February and had a backlog agenda at the first bi-weekly March meeting last week.

## For Drill

### Firemen To Burn Houses

New members of the Torrance Fire Department will have a chance to demonstrate their skills on actual residential fires beginning Monday if weather conditions permit.

Fire Chief Robert R. Lucas said his department has worked out an agreement with the Torrance Municipal Airport to burn down five vacant houses in the airport's "clear zone" for training purposes.

This "hot drill," Lucas said, will serve the double purpose of demolishing the vacant structures. The City of Torrance was unsuccessful in its recent attempt to obtain bids from companies which would move the houses elsewhere. The former residences must therefore be demolished at city expense, Lucas said.

The Fire Department hopes to complete the training within the next 30 days, restricting its practice to "smog green" days when air pollution is light.

The houses in question are located on Ward Avenue between 236th and 238th Streets.

## Police Are Film Stars In Series

The first police training film starring Torrance police officers is ready for public screening. Police Chief Walter Koenig has invited area residents to view the film Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall prior to the regular City Council meeting.

The motion picture is the first of 12 training films to be produced by United Research and Training, Inc. The series will be used to educate police recruits all over the United States and in some foreign countries.

Promotion literature will bill the Torrance department as "Model Police Department, USA."



PLANT TREES . . . Vicki Steinbach, 16, and Bill Ross, 17, both students at Narbonne High School, work to plant the first of 26 Bottle Brush trees in the city of Lomita. Student funds were used to purchase the tree. Other community organizations joined in purchasing and planting 25 other trees as part of the city's beautification program. Watching the two youths are (from left) Lee Stratford, president of the Lomita Chamber of Commerce; Mrs. Flora Hameetman and the Rev. Joel Rivers of the city's Beautification Commission. (Press-Herald Photo)