

City to Crackdown on Oil Well Operations

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A HOT IDEA . . . Chris Ross, a 20-year-old El Camino coed, is somewhat less than enthusiastic about the additional work being handed to her by Paul Corey, Miss Ross obviously would prefer to

enact her daydream and enjoy the warm weather which has prevailed here for the past several days. Both Miss Ross and Corey are employed by the Torrance Recreation Department. (Press-Herald Photo by Hal Fisher)

Planners Endorse Freeway Alternate

Stores Held Up Friday

Two Torrance businessmen were held up in separate incidents Friday.

Maurice Pesis of Hollywood, manager of Yukon Liquor, 3615 Artesia Blvd., told police a man about 50 entered his store at 2:45 p.m. and pulled out a gun. Pesis said he was forced to hand over \$544 from the cash register and his wallet.

The suspect stuffed the money in his pants pocket and fled in a car driven by an accomplice. Witnesses told police the license number of the car was JRV 656.

FRIDAY EVENING, a gun-toting suspect clad in tan khaki pants entered the office area of Friendly Furniture, 2067 Torrance Blvd., holding a clerk at bay.

While the suspect had his gun drawn, store owner Cecil Finkler happened on the scene and was forced to hand over the \$43 in his wallet.

Before fleeing, the 30-year-old suspect also took a \$250 check made out to the furniture company.

Police Nab Wilmington Twosome

Two Wilmington youths were picked up on suspicion of burglary by Torrance police late Wednesday night in the Arco parking lot, Carson Street at Border Avenue.

Arrested were Modesto Carpio Jr., 19, of 400 E. Lincoln Ave., and Elberto Mata, 19, of 400 Eastlake Ave., Wilmington.

Police said their car contained tools commonly used in burglaries and goods which appeared to be stolen.

New Bus Service To Start

The Torrance Transit System's new "Orange Line"—a shoppers' special—will be inaugurated Tuesday morning by Mayor Albert Isen.

The mayor will use a bottle of orange juice to launch the new service. At the same time, the city will unveil its new red-and-white buses and new uniforms for the drivers. And there'll be two pretty Transit Aides who will be on hand to assist shoppers using the new service.

Ceremonies are scheduled for 9 a.m. at the New Horizons Clubhouse, 22727 Maple Ave. The first bus will leave for the Del Amo and South Bay Shopping Centers at 9:20 a.m.

'Blue-Yellow' Route Skirts Edge of City

Torrance's Planning Commission has endorsed a route which skirts the western and southern edges of the city for the proposed Torrance Freeway.

Commissioners, by a 5-0 vote, recommended that the "blue-yellow" route be adopted by the state. Commission President David Halstead and Commissioner James Armstrong did not attend the meeting.

Preservation of prime industrial land in the city was cited as the chief reason for the commission's stand. Commissioners also said they felt the city should not be divided by the freeway.

IT ALSO WAS noted that the blue-yellow route would provide better access to and from the Palos Verdes Peninsula than other proposed alternates.

The blue-yellow route comes off the San Diego Freeway in the vicinity of Compton Boulevard and travels south along the Torrance-Redondo Beach boundary, turning east in the lower end of the Riviera section of Torrance. The route then travels along the foothill area south of the Pacific Coast Highway through Torrance and Lomita to join a previously adopted route at Anaheim Street and Vermont Avenue.

Commissioners said their second choice would be the blue route—it differs from the blue-yellow combination only in the southern area of

the city, where it travels nearer to the top of the bluffs.

THIRD CHOICE of the commission is a combination of the red and yellow routes. That route would follow Anza Avenue south and join the yellow route south of Pacific Coast Highway.

The commission's endorsement will be sent to the Torrance City Council for approval.

Commissioners ruled out the green and red routes which travel across the city north of the Torrance Municipal Airport. The two routes, George Brewster commented, would be unacceptable because they would eliminate prime industrial land in the city.

MRS. VELMA Shelbourn said she felt the city should not be divided by the freeway. Noting other cities would benefit from the freeway, Mrs. Shelbourn said, "I see no reason why the city should give up all the land. Redondo Beach and other cities should share in this."

The blue-yellow route is 11.4 miles long and would cost \$84.5 million to construct. The route would affect only 1,675 dwelling units.

The \$84.5 million cost estimate is the lowest of the 12 routes being considered, it was noted.

A public hearing on the proposed route is scheduled at Torrance High School at 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 10.

60-Day Limit Voted

Safety, Beauty Top List

In response to vocal demands from southeast Torrance residents, the City Council has decided to take emergency action to correct conditions in the South Torrance Oil Fields.

Meeting in special session Thursday night, the council voted to crack down on oil well operators, demanding radical improvements within 60 days.

The council expects hazardous conditions to be alleviated and proper fences and landscaping to be installed for beautification.

and beautification tenets into legal form. At present, the city has only minimal fencing and fire prevention regulations for oil wells. Residents have complained that even these minimal regulations have not been enforced.

TO PUT TEETH in their demands, councilmen threatened to bring back the barrel tax and increase license fees if oil well operators fail to respond.

Although the problem of "ugly, unsafe oil well sites" has existed for years, local residents have organized themselves and voiced their demands only within the past few weeks.

Currently forming a homeowners' group to spearhead the issue, residents complained of open tanks, abandoned wells, oil seepage, and generally rundown facilities. These conditions, they claim, are particularly hazardous to children.

One resident testified that his 11-year-old son severely injured his foot while exploring one of the wells.

IN ONE AREA, on 235th Street near Walnut, oil well facilities jut so far out into the street that it is difficult for residents to back their cars out of their driveways.

Residents also complained that the conditions attract flies, mosquitoes, and vermin. Councilmen directed City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier to prepare an emergency ordinance for Tuesday's meeting, putting safety

ordinance requiring a conditional use permit for the drilling of new oil wells and ordered that a full-time inspector be hired to monitor oil well operations.

Also discussed was the possibility of requiring street dedications from oil developers in areas where operations conflict with the normal flow of traffic.

COUNCILMEN also voted to prepare an emergency

Man Freed from Prison State Appeals Court Reverses Conviction

A 30-year-old man convicted of murdering his girl friend has been freed after two years in state prison.

Johnny Lew, convicted Sept. 30, 1966, of murdering Karen Gervasi, 21, of 22420 Evalyn Ave., was freed Wednesday. The murder conviction was reversed June 25 by the state Court of Appeals.

Lew was freed after he was returned to Superior Court here on an amended charge of assault with a deadly weapon. Judge Allen Miller sentenced him to a year's probation after Lew pleaded no contest to the amended charge. Judge

Miller then ordered Lew's release.

Miss Gervasi died after she and Lew went to her apartment Dec. 14, 1965. Lew's .32-calibre automatic went off and the woman was fatally wounded in the left temple.

Lew claimed the shooting was accidental, but Deputy District Attorney Robert Burnett, prosecutor in the case, based his case on the fact that Miss Gervasi was afraid of Lew and that the 30-year-old man had threatened to kill her.

The appellate court ruled testimony of friends of the woman about the threats on

her life to be "double hearsay." The court also said the prosecution used the "repeated statements of fear of the defendant to convince the jury that the defendant murdered Karen."

The higher court noted Lew's story of the shooting was consistent throughout all stages of the proceedings. Lew testified the gun went off as he picked it up after dropping the gun on the floor while unloading it.

He said he gave Miss Gervasi mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and then called an ambulance and police.

Lew formerly lived in Inglewood.

Would-Be Burglar Arrested

A Torrance homeowner and his son surprised a would-be burglar Thursday night—and saved a \$750 coin collection.

David Brown, 52, of 2830 W. 167th St., told police he arrived home at 8:45 p.m. When Brown observed electric lights being turned out inside the home, he sent his son to call the police.

In the meantime, Brown blocked the exit of a strange station wagon with his own car.

When police arrived they arrested Oscar Weatherall, 31, of Compton, who attempted to explain his presence by saying his car had broke down at the location.

A neighbor of the Browns said she observed someone place a white bundle in her backyard. Police said the bundle turned out to be a white sheet containing \$750 worth of collectors' coins, including a 1894 'P' silver dollar.

Brown identified the coins as his property.

New Hours Slated for City Parks

New hours are now in effect for city parks.

The following parks will be open Monday through Saturday from 12 noon to 4 p.m. until Sept. 12: El Retiro, Hickory, Lago Seco, Torrance, Guenser, Entradero, La Romeria, Paradise, Pueblo, and Victor. Sept. 12, all parks will resume regular fall and winter hours from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays.

McMaster and Welteria Parks will conduct supervised activities Monday through Friday from 1 to 9 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Czech Native to Speak . . .

Michael Van Horn, a World War II partisan fighter and native of Czechoslovakia, will address members of the Bert S. Crossland Post 170 of the American Legion Tuesday. Van Horn will speak at 8 a.m. at the Legion hall, 1109 Van Ness Ave. Van Horn joined the Czech underground while a teenager to fight against the Nazi German occupation of his native land. After World War II, he again joined the Czech underground, this time to fight the communists. He fled from Czechoslovakia in 1948 with a price on his head.

Bids Received for Property . . .

A combined bid of \$700,000 was received for beachfront property in Torrance and Redondo Beach Wednesday, but no sale has been confirmed. The property, site of the Old Hollywood Riviera Club, is owned by Sovereign Development Co., which has held a permit to construct a high-rise building on the Redondo Beach portion for the past three years. Financial problems have plagued the development, however, and brought about the auction. The Torrance parcel, zoned for a three-story apartment building, brought a bid of \$400,000, it was reported. A bid of \$300,000 was received for the Redondo Beach parcel. Spokesmen for the auctioneers said the bidders will not be identified until the sale is confirmed.

To Observe Labor Day . . .

Press-Herald offices will be closed tomorrow in observance of Labor Day. Banks and most business firms, as well as industrial plants in the city will be closed in observance of the holiday. Rubbish collections throughout the city will be one day late for the next two weeks as city employees celebrate Labor Day and Admission Day. Government offices will be closed both Monday, Sept. 2 and Sept. 9.

Failure To Yield Is Cited

A Torrance woman will be cited for failure to yield while making a left turn, following a collision which totally demolished her car.

Mrs. Dorothy M. Henriksen, 43, of 22303 Evalyn Ave., was treated at Little Company of Mary Hospital for a six-inch laceration on her forehead and a possible fractured knee.

Police said the collision occurred on Torrance Boulevard at Donora Avenue, as Mrs. Henriksen attempted to make a left turn.

Driver of the other car was Mrs. Mellane Knowles, 32, of 21513 Barbara Ave.