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and Lomita News

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TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 1932

SECTION A

5c PER COPY

TEACHERS TO HELP LOCAL UNEMPLOYED

Vote 1 Per Cent of Salary For Year For Relief Work Here

In voting to give one per cent of their yearly salary during the next six months for unemployment relief, teachers employed in Torrance schools specified this week that they desired their contribution to be expended locally.

The percentage donation plan has been adopted by the Los Angeles City Employees' Welfare Association. Principal Herbert S. Wood, in announcing this endorsement of the plan by the high school instructors Monday, said that he would contact Councilman R. R. Smith and the Torrance Relief Society to find out the best manner in which the instructors' fund could be used.

Principal William A. Bell, Jr., at the elementary school, said that that institution's instructors had also endorsed the one per cent plan and that he would find out if the money raised in the elementary school could be spent the same as the high school instructors' donation.

Students Also Give Aid
It was also announced this week that the student body at the high school had voted to turn over a sum, the amount of which is to be determined by a special committee of high school student body directors this week, to the Parent Teachers Association to aid in keeping up the free-lunch plan for needy school children.

Approximately \$84,000 is needed, the P. T. A. declared this week, to furnish the 100,000 daily lunches to the children until the end of the year. All existing funds for this vital necessity have been expended.

The local student body has pledged itself to donate all surplus funds from the student body store, the cafeteria, and other student enterprises.

Luther Hyde Is Struck By Freight Train

Miraculously Escapes With Only Slight Injuries Yesterday

Luther A. Hyde, well-known Torrance resident, miraculously escaped serious and perhaps fatal injuries yesterday afternoon when his automobile stalled on the Santa Fe tracks at Torrance boulevard and Madrid avenue and was struck by a south-bound freight train.

He was rushed to the Jared Sidney Torrance Memorial hospital where it was found he was painfully but not seriously hurt. Hyde was en route to his son, Carl Hyde's home, to attend a birthday party for his granddaughter when the accident happened.

He was taken to Carl Hyde's home after remaining at the hospital only a few hours yesterday. His injuries were confined to a few scalp wounds, the hospital records show. Hyde is 70 years old.

According to an eye-witness, Gene Wanberg, Hyde stopped his car to observe the boulevard stop and then started across the tracks. His machine stalled and was hit about at the rear door and thrown to the opposite pavement by the freight. Hyde evidently was thrown out the right front door. The train stopped in about its own length and Engineer J. Weintz and Conductor Charles Norton rushed back to lend aid. Hyde remained consciousness shortly after being received at the hospital.

The victim had but recently recovered from a stroke. His wife passed away a few months ago at the family home, 1695 Greenwood street.

CITY HALL'S SIGN WILL BE REPAIRED OR REPLACED

At the suggestion of Councilman G. A. R. Steiner, the city engineer was instructed Tuesday night by the council to investigate and report the condition of the sign on the city hall, which Steiner said was in need of immediate repair or replacement with a new one.

To Help Taxpayers Prepare Returns

February 25 and 26 have been named as the dates for the establishment of a temporary headquarters of the Internal Revenue Service at the Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of assisting taxpayers of Torrance and vicinity in preparing and filing their 1931 federal income tax returns.

Notice that a deputy collector from Galen W. Welch's office would be in the city at that time was given the Chamber of Commerce this week.

SCHOOL TAXES SAID DUE FOR JUMP IN 1933

Merger Has Local Interest Because of Coming Charter Vote

Torrance is due for an increase in next year's school tax from one to three cents over the \$1.67 rate for the present fiscal year.

This was predicted this week by Supervisor Shaw when the Board of Supervisors, by a vote of four to one, granted a petition of 7040 signers for the annexation of the Huntington Park elementary and high school district to the Los Angeles city school system. Shaw cast the only dissenting vote to the merger, declaring he could not see why the taxpayers in the Los Angeles school district (of which Torrance is a part) should shoulder a burden created in another community.

The school rate in the Huntington Park district last year was \$2.27 per \$100 assessed valuation. The annexed district contains two high schools, one in Huntington Park and one in South Gate, with a total of 3050 pupils, and eight elementary schools with an attendance of 6240.

Cost Said Double Reason
The merger has a local interest here because of the coming charter election, which if successful will divorce the Torrance schools from the Los Angeles system and establish a Torrance school district.

While the Huntington Park-South Gate school district derived this year's school funds from an assessed valuation of approximately half that of Torrance, that district had a school population of more than six times that of the total number of students enrolled here.

Thus, proponents of the charter declare, the reason why it is more profitable for the Huntington Park-South Gate schools to enter the Los Angeles system is exactly the same reason why Torrance should get out of the same system—namely, better finance. Torrance's large assessed valuation in comparison with the small number of students goes to pay the cost of maintaining a low school tax in more populated districts with a lower valuation.

Don't Growl About High Taxes, Here's Way to Lower Them!

Is your property assessed too high in comparison with your neighbors? If you think so, you are invited to consult with J. C. Smith, chairman of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce tax committee.

Smith is working with the county assessor for this district in an effort to adjust assessment values throughout the city so that they will all be equitable. Several glaring inconsistencies have been uncovered by the Chamber of Commerce committee, and the assessor has agreed to cooperate in a survey of all city appraisals. It is planned to establish valuations which will remain for three years.

Several years ago, Smith headed a committee which secured a material reduction in property assessments in Torrance and he is hopeful of securing further reductions at this time, if property owners will bring their grievances to him.

BILLIARD HALL ROBBED OF CIGARETTES AND MONEY

About 70 cartons of cigarettes and \$12.60 in cash was stolen from A. J. Billiard Hall, 1211 El Prado Tuesday night by burglars who entered through a side window. Police reported that they were hampered in their investigation of the theft by the absence of any clues.

EMIL KETTLER PASSES AWAY AT AGE OF 84

Settler in District in 1881 Leaves Large Family Many Friends

As all men must, Emil Kettler, Sr., came to the end of a trail this week that began in Germany in 1847, slowly, steadily moved westward to where the present city of Wilmington and the community of Lomita is now located. Mr. Kettler, aged 84, passed away at his home, 2929 South Normandie avenue, Los Angeles, last Sunday.

In 1879, two years after settling in Wilmington on land adjoining the Hollibaugh ranch when Wilmington was sometimes called Germantown, Mr. Kettler married. He sold the Wilmington acreage a few years later and bought the large Kettler ranch on El Camino Real, recently annexed to Torrance. For over 40 years he lived on this property. The erection of oil wells on the ranch ended the raising of hay and grain.

At his funeral yesterday afternoon, his wife, Amalie, four daughters, five sons, 22 grandchildren and one great-grandchild, all residents of this county, gathered to pay a final tribute to a sturdy pioneer who carved a considerable estate out of his ranch, founded in 1881. Interment was at Rosedale cemetery.

Half-Century in District
But his immediate family and 23 descendants were not the only ones to mourn his loss. Mr. Kettler made many friends. His residence in Southern California during the past half-century brought him in contact with all phases of community and civic life. These friends had added their recollections to the family's best wishes only last March when Mr. and Mrs. Kettler celebrated their golden wedding.

Many in Torrance, Lomita and Wilmington knew Emil Kettler, came to realize that the sons were devoted to the family homestead ranch and the Kettler Ranch figured in a number of improvement projects, the latest still being in the proposed stage—the Eshelman avenue extension. Further progress of this project will have to await the settlement of the Kettler estate now.

Surviving daughters are Mrs. Hulda Stoner, Mrs. Mamie Koepke, Mrs. Emma Blanchard and Mrs. Lucy Marshall; the sons, Emil, Jr., Henry, John, Albert and William.

Legion Post Plans Special Dinner To Get New Members

Judge Leroy Dawson of the Superior Court, will be the principal speaker at a special dinner and entertainment for present and prospective members of Bert S. Crossland American Legion post Monday evening, January 25, at 6:45 o'clock. No set price will be made for the dinner, members being invited to "feed the kitty" for any amount that they wish. Members are asked to bring one eligible ex-serviceman as a guest of the post at no extra charge.

"Frog Ponds" To Be Drained Off

Two Intersections Will Get
Attention of Engineer

What Councilman Ed Nelson termed "frog ponds" at the intersections of Sonoma and Beech and Madrid and Sonoma avenues, will either be filled or provided with adequate drainage in the next few weeks.

Nelson pointed out that after every rain those two intersections remained inundated for many days afterwards because the drainage was inadequate. City Engineer Leonard was instructed by the council Tuesday night to find out if the Santa Fe Railroad would permit the excess rain water to drain into their right-of-way. If this is not allowed then other means will be found to eliminate the water.

COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY

An adjourned meeting of the city council will be held Tuesday afternoon at 4 p. m., to consider the final reading of the re-zoning ordinance.

STAR ROLE GIVEN LOCAL 4-YEAR-OLD IN TALKIES

At last Torrance has come into fame—it has produced its first motion picture star.

He is Master Eugene Butler, 4-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Butler. Instead of following in his father's footsteps as a clothing shop owner, Master Eugene has chosen the audible flickers for his vocation, and it reports received here this week are correct. Master Eugene is on the brink of a real career.

NEW FLICKER HERO



MASTER EUGENE BUTLER

At the age of two, the boy appeared before microphones in a Los Angeles broadcasting studio on a regular weekly program. He is a student at a Los Angeles dramatic school and is deeply interested in his work, according to his mother, who accompanied him back and forth to Hollywood during the five weeks the picture was being produced.

WINTER CLASS TO GRADUATE AT HIGH SCHOOL THIS EVE.

What might be called a prelude to the commencement exercises to be held tonight at 8:15 o'clock at the High School auditorium, was observed yesterday afternoon in the same building when 38 Junior High school pupils advanced to Senior High school standing.

Lomita Blvd. Hearing Set For Monday

A hearing which is of great interest in Lomita and which will probably attract a large number of residents from that community will be held at the Hall of Records, Monday morning at 10 o'clock, January 25, when the final airing on the proposed widening and paving of Lomita boulevard comes before the Board of Supervisors.

This six-year-old project, the bone of many contentions and the subject of probably a score or more of different petitions is expected to be settled one way or the other at this hearing.

There have been two hearings in the past on the Lomita boulevard proposal, but each have come to no definite decision. Monday morning's session is hoped to be the last work on the matter. It is reported that 53 per cent of the property owners interested in the boulevard project have signed petitions rejecting the widening and paving proposal.

Snow Storm Snubs City!

Much-Publicised Polar Wave Fails to Pay Visit to Our Town.

The Weather Man "gyped" Torrance of its share in the much-publicised Southern California snow storm last Friday morning. Try as we could, we failed to detect an actual bonafide, polar-made, crystal-white, genuine snow flake.

There was a heavy frost or sleet in some parts of the city, but snow—no. While residents of other parts of Los Angeles and other counties hilariously greeted the strange phenomenon, we of Torrance have to merely report that we received .77 inches of rainfall "the night of the big snow" and that the city's total to date now stands at 9.56 inches. Last year Torrance had soaked in but 3.22 inches of moisture.

LOCAL SCHOOL STATUS UNDER CHARTER TOLD

County Supt. Clifton Says Teachers Pensions Will Not Be Sacrificed

All Torrance school teachers, whether in the Elementary or High schools, will continue to enjoy the benefits of the State Tenure Act should this city adopt a new charter on April 11, and the recreation of a separate school district here will not deprive any teacher of a pension, according to A. R. Clifton, county superintendent of schools, who addressed a group of 40 representative citizens Tuesday evening at Earl's Cafe.

School affairs were thoroughly discussed at the round-table meeting, which was presided over by Dr. J. S. Lancaster, chairman of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce educational committee.

After a brief preliminary talk by the County Superintendent of Schools, the meeting was thrown open for discussion, and many questions regarding the status of local schools, under a chartered city were answered by Clifton.

Should this city adopt the charter, it would automatically divorce itself from the Los Angeles city school system and set up its own school district. Members of the board of education will be elected by the people and this local school board will be in direct charge of local school affairs, according to Clifton. School taxes would be levied by the local board of education but all disbursements would be made, as they are at present, by the County Superintendent of Schools.

Tenure Act Remains

Clifton expressed the opinion that due to the fact that the total enrollment in the Torrance school district would exceed 850 pupils, that all teachers, whether working in the elementary or high schools, would be under the State Tenure Act after they had served the required three years. This opinion is contrary to the general impression held heretofore that only elementary school teachers would come under the Tenure Act, because of the fact that the local high school has less than an average daily attendance of 850.

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Taxpayers, Awake!

Proposed Charter Offers Refuge From Menace of Multiple Liens

Property owners of Torrance, are you awake to the insidious threat of confiscation of property which menaces each and every investor, not only in Torrance but in the entire State of California?

Are you alive to the probabilities of disaster contained in the various public improvement laws, some 15 in number, under which the investor bends his back to the breaking point to carry the load of bonds, assessments, liens, and what not, whereby a few are enriched and the struggling home-owner is beaten flat, crushed, spoiled of his home, his income, his possessions down to the last dollar?

If you are not, then it is time to give ear, to pay some attention to the conditions into which you are drifting as a result of these insidious laws, fostered by special interests and enacted by short-sighted or unscrupulous lawmakers.

In a timely article written by Marshall Stimson for a recent publication, facts are arrayed concerning the state of affairs that well may give taxpayers a chill of foreboding and halt the prospective investor on the brink of a precipice that descends to ruin.

Cumulative Assessments
What with overlapping assessments, liens, paving bonds, etc., etc., to the limit and beyond, property owners in the city of Los Angeles, says this writer, have been loaded with debt far and beyond the normal valuation of their property. Not only is the property owner burdened with assessments for improvements of various kinds, but under the provisions of certain improvement acts, notably that of 1925, his assessment becomes cumulative in character, so that he is forced to pay not only his own portion of the cost, but also the portion of all other property holders in the district who have defaulted in their payments. To such an extreme can this be carried under the Act of 1925, that were all property owners to default until but one was left who was able however unwilling to pay, this unfortunate last man could be compelled to settle for the ENTIRE COST of the improvement for the district regardless of the relatively small proportionate value of his holdings.

Does this spell RUIN, or doesn't it?

In addition to the possibilities just cited under this particular act, there are other avenues by which the cost to the property owner may be piled up, notably through the work of appraisers, attorneys' fees, engineers' fees, and all the other incidentals attendant upon the initiating of improvement proceedings. All this many times without regard for the wishes of the taxpayer, or regard for the question of actual civic, personal, or financial benefit to the district or individuals involved.

To cite one glaring example: In a locality not far from Los Angeles, it was proposed to widen a highway 10 feet. One piece of property adjoining the highway to be widened came under the scrutiny of the appraisers. A value of \$8500 was placed on the 10-foot strip to be taken from this property, which sum was more than the entire piece had been valued at. Later in the proceedings a new set of appraisers was sent out to view the property and because this particular strip was a part of a quarry a new valuation of \$117,000 was set on the 10-foot strip, to which in the regular course of events in the improvement were added the two sets of appraisers' fees, engineers' fees, cost of material and labor, and the condemnation value of all portions of the 10-foot strip belonging to other owners along the right-of-way who must be paid for their condemned property, all of which rolled into one lump sum became an assessment against the district to be paid by the taxpayers adjoining the highway.

Rooster Attacks Child; Pecks Five Wounds In Scalp

Albert Murrin, Jr., year and a half-old son of Albert Murrin, 715 Amapola avenue, learned about poultry Saturday morning when he was attacked by a rooster.

The bird knocked the child down and pecked him severely, inflicting five deep wounds in his scalp which had to be attended by a physician.

Legion Medals Are Given School Pupils

American Legion medals were presented to Mildred Higgins and Fred Hansen, Jr., both members of the A8 class that advanced into the Junior High school from the Elementary school Tuesday.

J. H. Burchett, Legionnaire and faculty member at the high school, made the awards. The medals are presented semi-annually to the boy and girl who is judged the most outstanding student in character, leadership, scholarship and citizenship.

Gasoline Contract Awarded By City

Five bids to furnish the city with 5000 gallons of gasoline during the coming 12 months were opened at council meeting Tuesday night. The contract was awarded to the Union Oil Company who bid 12 cents a gallon. A representative from the Richardson Oil Company arrived too late with that concern's quotation.

ATTEND BIRTHDAY PARTY

Members of Bert S. Crossland Post, American Legion, Drun and Bugle corps, and the local Auxiliary, attended the 19th District birthday party at Long Beach last night.

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More Expense
To add further burden to the already overloaded taxpayer, comes the procedure under the law, of collecting the assessments with the taxes, which makes them subject to the penalties which accrue in connection with delinquent taxes, anywhere from 15 to 40 per cent each year. Under certain acts, if the assessment is not paid when due a 50 per cent penalty is immediately added.

Under all of the improvement acts it is possible, says Mr. Stimson, that "all of the proceedings may go through, an assessment or bond issued, and the assessment or bond be foreclosed, property sold and disposed of "WITHOUT ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE of the property owner and that without actual fraud on the part of anyone interested."

Diametrically opposite provisions as to the procedure of the owner regarding bond or assessment, contained in several of the improvement acts, adds to the confusion of the party most interested, the taxpayer, and generally results in more expense and worry to the innocent property owner.

Further avenues of expense are contained in court proceedings for foreclosure when assessments or bonds are left unpaid. Two methods are open for this legal action: Through the County Treasurer at practically no expense to the owner, or through the courts, with a considerable expense in the way of fees and costs. In one instance referred to by Mr. Stimson a foreclosure suit filed to recover the sum of 75 cents cost the defendant \$45.

Principal offenders in this murderous game of saddling the people with the ever-mounting burden of debt, says Mr. Stimson, have been the investment bond

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