

BEAUTY KILLED IN TRAIN-AUTO SMASH-UP MARKS CITY'S FIRST '50 AUTO DEATH

EDITED in Torrance — PRINTED in Torrance — OWNED by Torrance Folks — SINCE 1914

TORRANCE HERALD

5¢
Delivered By Mail
\$2 Yearly

36th YEAR—NO. 15

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1950

12 PAGES



Western Avenue Claims First Accident Victim

A 24-year-old beautiful and wealthy girl who died in a train-auto crash early Monday morning became the first traffic victim in Torrance this year, police records indicate.

Killed in the crash was Betty Ann Lerche, 24, 1920 Torrance boulevard, wealthy daughter of a St. Paul, Minnesota, realtor.

Her fiance, John Elbert Anderson, 29, of 1204 West 13th street, San Pedro, escaped with cuts and bruises.

Scene of the fatal crash was the unlighted railroad crossing recently opened on Western avenue just south of Sepulveda boulevard.

The crash occurred at approximately 1:45 a.m. on Monday morning, according to Captain Willard H. Haslam and Patrolman Bob Lewis of the Torrance Police Department.

Automatic signals for the intersection were slated for installation on April 16, according to a Santa Fe Railroad spokesman.

"We have been informed by the Union Switch and Signal Company, manufacturers of the signals to be installed at the crossing, that due to a heavy backlog of orders, actual delivery of the signals cannot be expected before July," Gordon Strachan, a public relations official of the railroad, told newsmen yesterday.

Officers reported that Anderson was headed south on Western avenue when he crashed into the locomotive of an eastbound train.

The crashed auto was dragged approximately 125 feet along the tracks.

Apparently living when picked up by Sullivan's Ambulance, she was pronounced dead on arrival.

(Continued on Page 3)



FIRST TRAFFIC DEATH . . . Show above (left) is the late-model car which carried beautiful Betty Lerche to her death early Monday morning on Western avenue near Sepulveda boulevard. At the right is the unlighted signal at the Western avenue crossing where the accident occurred. With Miss Lerche at the lower left is John Anderson, driver of the car, who was slightly injured in the collision.



Smoke, Fire Takes Heavy Food Toll

Fire of undetermined origin broke out in the Torrance Food Market, 1617 Cabrillo avenue, last night causing considerable damage from fire and smoke.

Firemen were able to prevent spread of flames throughout the building. Principal damage was smoked meat, scorched labels on canned goods and some water damage.

Proprietor of the market, Archie Ness, said damage to stock would probably amount to several thousand dollars.

Three fire companies, under Fire Chief J. J. Benner, answered the call. Firemen were

about to break in the front of the building, which was closed for the night, when the proprietor arrived with a key. Intense smoke made it difficult to enter the building after it was opened.

Sherley, Jackson Ready for Final Council Session

Mayor J. Hugh Sherley Jr. and Councilman A. L. Jackson, both of whom declined to seek reelection, will take their seats for the last time at next Tuesday's council meeting to canvass the ballots of Tuesday's election and to install the new councilmen.

Selection of a Mayor to succeed Sherley is likely to narrow to a choice among Councilmen Bob L. Haggard, George Powell and Nick Draie.

Whether or not a new mayor will be elected immediately will remain for the new council to decide.

Spelman, Blount In As Ballot Recount Hinted

Runnerup Trails By 7 Votes

The voice of the outlying districts was heard Tuesday night as Harvey B. Spelman and Willys G. Blount topped a field of eight candidates in a race for two seats on the Torrance City Council.

In a photo finish that was anybody's race up until the last precinct was tallied, Victor E. Benstead, chairman of the Civil Service Commission and top favorite in the councilmanic derby, reined up in third place—to miss winning a seat on the council by a scant seven votes under Blount.

Rumors that a recount of the votes would be ordered received little confirmation from Benstead. Asked by reporters if he would order a recount, Benstead said he had no statement to make at this time.

Due to the narrow margin of votes separating Blount and Benstead, a recounting of the ballots would not be unlikely. Cost of the recounting would be borne partly by the city, with the person or organization ordering the recount bearing a major share of the cost.

In the two-man race for city clerk, Albert H. Bartlett, city clerk for the past 23 years, received a 2187 nod over Robert E. "Bud" Lee, chairman of the Recreation Commission.

Mrs. Margaret Fordice, incumbent treasurer, likewise was re-elected with a 1910 to 1735 vote over Charles B. Mitchell, service station manager.

C. Ed Jones, who was rated as a 4-to-5 favorite by the "Penny Press," an out-of-town printed throw-away shopper, disappointed followers by com-

(Continued on Page 3)



HARVEY B. SPELMAN JR. AND WILLYS G. BLOUNT
Seven Vote Margin May Bring Recount

Walteria Men Choose Officers

Walteria Business Men's club last week elected Fred R. Stevens president at its meeting in the Fish Shanty.

John Bauman was elected vice-president; Larry Booth, secretary; and Dale Wands, treasurer.

SENIOR-JUNIOR CHAMBER LIAISON OFFICER NAMED

Dean L. Sears, president of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, has been approved as coordinating director of the Torrance Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Health Center Open House Set For Friday Noon

County Health officers will get a taste of their own medicine tomorrow afternoon. Beginning at 1 and lasting until 3 o'clock, members of the Torrance Health Center staff at 2300 Carson street will be letting the public give them the once over.

It is all part of the county's 100th anniversary celebration and the health center will be open to the public for inspection during the afternoon party according to Dr. Henry C. Smiley, district health officer.

Members of the staff will be on hand to explain the services offered in the health center—one of the 13 health districts of the Los Angeles County Health Department.

Included among the departments to be shown tomorrow will be the baby clinic, the X Ray laboratories, the children's dental treatment rooms and the general treatment rooms.

Members of Torrance women's clubs will be there to serve as hostesses at the refreshment table, according to Mrs. Gladys Pearce, supervising public health nurse at the clinic.

Complete Election Returns on Page 3

For a complete picture of how the vote was cast at Tuesday's councilmanic election in each of Torrance's 30 precincts, turn to page three. Data for the table was taken from the official records of City Clerk A. H. Bartlett.

Fly Fighters Renew Attack; Help Asked

A call for Torrance residents to take arms in the annual fight against flies was issued this week by C. W. Clemmer, foreman of the city park department.

According to Clemmer, park department crews will begin spraying of the cities alleys with powerful fly insecticide on Monday, April 17.

He asked that all residents in the area place all garbage cans, can barrels, and other refuse containers in the alley the next regular trash and garbage collection day.

Crews will spray alleys and trash containers on the collection day in each area.

The first attack against the annual fly menace will be launched on Monday when crews begin spraying the Torrance Manor district.

"With warm weather approaching and the subsequent increase in the fly breeding rate, we ask that all local citizens help curb the menace by observing all sanitary measures recommended for the control of the disease-carrying fly," Clemmer urged.

Four Seek Crown

Ann Phyllis Mondor and Jackie Johnson, two Torrance High School Tartarettes, have become the latest two lovelies to enter the race for the title of Miss Torrance of 1950.

The other two contestants in the Junior Woman's Club fund-raising campaign are Beverly Moore, Torrance Area Youth Band Majorette and Barbara Zachery, ice skating speed queen.

Miss Mondor will be sponsored by the Torrance Rotary Club and Miss Johnson by the Merle Norman Cosmetic Studios, according to Mrs. Suzie Allen, publicity chairman.

The Torrance Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsors Beverly Moore while Barbara Zachery has the backing of the Torrance Lions Club.

Any girl living in Torrance of the ages of 16 to 25 years who wishes to enter the contest is urged to contact Mrs. Laura Lewis, 805 Acacia avenue, Torrance 454M before deadline time on April 21 midnight.

According to Mrs. Maxine Jensen, Junior Woman's Club president, a parade on April 22 will mark the start of the Fifth Annual Fund-raising drive to obtain financial help for the construction of a building for the YWCA.

Added this week to the long list of prizes to be awarded to the Queen and her court is a \$20 cold wave from Alice's Beauty Salon, and a Zircon ring from the National Home Appliance Store.

Jack Bally, Master of Ceremonies on the "Queen for a Day" radio and television show, informed the club in a letter this week, that due to an out-of-town booking he will not be able to attend the Coronation Ball on May 26.

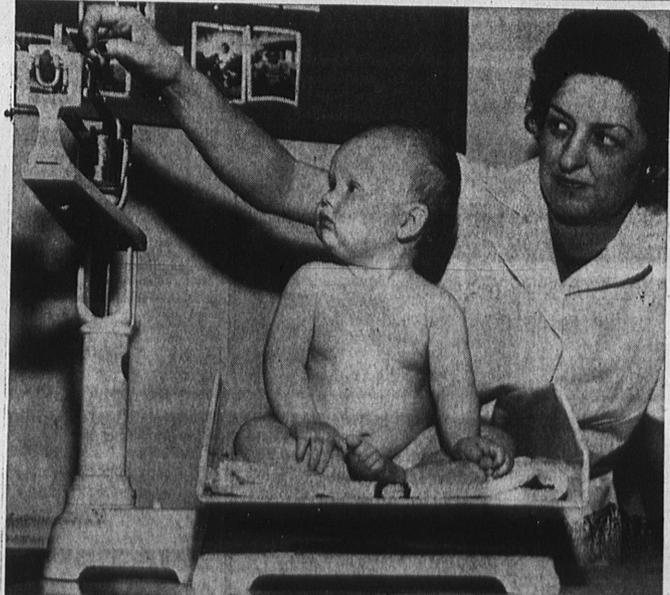


ANN PHYLLIS MONDOR
In Queen Race



JACKIE JOHNSON
And She Too

(Bob Roberts photos)



MY, BUT I'VE GROWN . . . Little Linda DeVore had just 'dropped in' at the Torrance Health Center for her regular checkup when a Herald photographer happened through the baby clinic. Shown with little Linda is Mrs. A. M. Bingham, 2354 Sonoma. Linda seems to take her weight seriously. The Health Center plans an open house tomorrow from 1 to 3 p.m.—Herald photo.