

# New City Recreation Director Named

## Homes vs. Industry

# Big Tract Owners Take Land Rezoning 'Beating'

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HARRY VAN BELLEHAM  
... Takes Over Recreation Aug. 1

## New Recreation Boss To Take Over Aug. 1

Appointment of Harry Van Belleham, 37, of 2071 W. 162nd St., to take over as head of the city Recreation Department effective Aug. 1, was unanimously approved by the City Council here Tuesday.

Van Belleham, who has lived in Torrance since 1938, except for a couple of years in Long Beach, has been acting district manager for the Eastern Section of the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Department for more than six years.

Prior to his affiliation with the County, the city's new recreation boss spent four years with the Long Beach Recreation Department.

When Van Belleham takes over here Aug. 1, he will succeed Frank Carpenter, who was informed by the Council recently that he would not be rehired after that date.

Van Belleham placed first on a list of eligibles during the Civil Service examination for the job recently. Carpenter, who also passed the test, was hired by the Council for the job, but was notified earlier this month that he was being released.

The Van Bellehams have two daughters, Linda, 17, a senior at Torrance High, and Judy, 10, a fifth grader at the North Torrance Elementary School.

He attended Long Beach Poly. City College, and is now taking courses at the University of Southern California which will apply toward a doctorate.

He is a former member of the Belflower Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Belflower Optimist Club.

"I will do my best to give the people of Torrance the type of recreation they want," he told the Herald following his appointment by the Council Tuesday.

Van Belleham said he would meet with civic groups, parent-teacher associations, and other such groups to determine what kind of a program he would try to supply.

## Both Arms, Legs Broken in Crash

A. J. McCown, 45, president of McCown Drug Stores, Inc., was recuperating yesterday in the Huntington Memorial Hospital from injuries received in an auto accident in which he broke both arms and legs.

McCown, also president of the Harbor Area Employers Council, was injured June 17 on the Arroyo Seco Freeway between Glenarm and Fair Oaks Avenues when his car became involved in a four-car accident which tied up traffic on the busy freeway for an hour and 40 minutes. McCown's auto collided with one car and was knocked into the path of another traveling at a high rate of speed in the opposite direction.

## Sulphur Fire Cause Still Undetermined

Fire Chief J. J. Benner said yesterday that he was still trying to determine just what started the \$90,000 fire last week in the United Sulphur Plant here.

Chief Benner said it was almost a certainty that the fire started in the "duster," which is a huge drum used to screen out the sulphur before sacking.

Whether the fire was started from a spark at the electric motor, or at the other end of the operation around some bearings could not be determined, Benner said.

The fire chief reported that all of his men except Don Lamb, who was severely burned at the fire, were back on duty. Lamb is expected to return to duty in the near future.

## Whereabouts of Escapee Unknown

Officials of the Camarillo State Hospital refused to give information yesterday on the whereabouts of Otto Stiefel, 42, a patient of the hospital, who was reported to have escaped Sunday and was believed by local police to be headed for his wife's home in Waleria.

Whether Stiefel has been returned to the hospital could not be revealed over the telephone, hospital spokesmen said.

Described by a police teletype as "possibly violent," Stiefel formerly lived at 24707 Winlock Dr. in Waleria. His wife, Dora, still resides at that address.

Stiefel might return to his home alerted all patrols in the Waleria area to be on the lookout for the man. Stiefel allegedly threatened to "get" Sgt. J. W. Maestri, of the local police, who was instrumental in committing the Waleria man to the hospital.

## ILLNESS DELAYS TRIAL

Preliminary hearings for 21-year-old Melvin Richard Moore on charges of attempted murder were delayed in Judge John A. Shidler's South Bay Municipal Court Tuesday when the accused was too ill to be moved from the county jail to the courtroom.

## Council Bows to Chickens and Cows; To the Victors Belong the Spoils

The battle of the urban versus the rural ended Tuesday night when the City Council officially dropped an intention to annex the Victor area to the City of Torrance.

Representatives of the area, an unincorporated island of county territory surrounded on three sides by Torrance, presented a petition to the Council on May 28 stating that the residents of the section were completely satisfied with their present status, and did not want to be annexed.

The petition was presented by Mrs. Homer Rodgers, who said it contained the signatures of 121 people, or 90 per cent of the area's residents.

The council bowed to the desires of the Victorites to keep their small farms, chickens and west-

## Busy Highway Traffic Halts For Lucy, Ricky

Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz pulled "The Long, Long Trailer" through Torrance yesterday.

Hundreds of bystanders collected at the intersection of Pacific Coast Hwy. and Newton St. as MGM camera crews and technicians set up a highway scene, using the passing traffic to stage a hair-raising scene with Desi. Filming of a scene for the forthcoming Technicolor picture had Desi race across the highway through the onslaught of heavy traffic, and later had Miss Ball, known to millions of TV viewers as "Lucy Ricardo," thumbing a ride from passing motorists.

At the signal to break, the cameramen and studio crews disappeared down the smoggy highway, and the area picked up where it left off at being just another spot along a busy highway.

## Tethering Horses, Cattle Forbidden By New City Law

Horses and cattle will no longer be allowed to be tethered within the Torrance city limits as a result of action taken Tuesday night by the City Council.

The Council adopted City Ordinance 644, prohibiting the tethering of horses or cattle, and the ordinance will become law on July 23, 30 days after adoption.

The law was drafted after protests from North Torrance homeowners concerning the death of a small child there about a year ago. The child was killed by a tethered animal.

Tethering is defined in the ordinance as "tying by rope or chain, an animal so that it is fixed to a tree or pole in such a way that it can only move a certain distance from the tree or pole."

The City Land Use ordinances define the zones within the city in which horses or cattle can be kept. The new ordinance prohibits tethering within these areas.

Any violation of the ordinance will be classed as a misdemeanor, and will be punishable by not more than six months in city or county jail, or a fine of not more than \$500, or both.

## If the Lights Go Out, Don't Blame Spelman

The Southern California Edison Company is the only power company engaged in supplying electric power to the local area, thus, the City of Torrance always buys its power from the Southern California Edison Company.

At Tuesday evening's City Council meeting, the Council received a bid from the Edison Company, for supplying power to Torrance for the year 1953-54.

The air in the Council chamber became charged when Harvey Spelman, Jr., rose, and with an impish smile playing on his lips, said: "I move that we accept the bid from the Southern California Edison Company, and that all other bids be rejected."



BRAVE LAD . . . Norman Armin, 8, fights back tears while ambulance attendant applies splint to leg that it was thought boy had broken in fall from pinto horse, background. Later, it was discovered that the boy had only suffered, bruises and a leg laceration.

## \$1,240,948 Budget

# Propose 3-Cent Hike in 1953-54 City Tax Rate

The population of Torrance increasing at a rate far more rapid than the assessed valuation has prompted a three cent increase in the city tax rate for the next year, City Manager George W. Stevens told the City Council Tuesday night as he presented a tentative budget of \$1,240,948. The new tax rate will be \$1.165 as compared to \$1.125 for 1952-53. Stevens said he was going to ask a citizens' committee to study the budget before the council is asked to adopt it next month.

## 1 Man Killed In Crash, 3 Injured

A traffic crash at 214th and Main Sts., caused the death of one person and the hospitalization of three others Tuesday evening.

Fatally injured was Sidney Ramey, of Wilmington, who died a few minutes after arrival at Harbor General Hospital. Funeral arrangements are pending at Stone and Myers Mortuary.

Ramey's wife, Martha, 62, and daughter Lela, 28, were also injured in the crash and are in a serious condition at Harbor Hospital.

The Ramey car collided with another car driven by Ernest Rensaler, 39, who received head injuries.

Rensaler, who lives at 1116 Orizaba St., in Long Beach, was transferred from the hospital to a prison ward yesterday, Sheriff's deputies reported, and he is being held on felony manslaughter and drunk driving charges.

The accident occurred when both cars were traveling south on Main St., and Rensaler's car rammed the rear of the Ramey vehicle, forcing it off the road and into a tree.

## Weather

The weather bureau predicts a typical Southern California day for today in Torrance, with morning fog, and hazy afternoon sunshine, tempered by a light sea breeze.

## 'Learn a Lesson' Councilman Warns

Following an hour and half long hearing, one of the worst in recent months, the City Council Tuesday voted 4-1 to reverse the decision of the Planning Commission and rezoned a 55-acre tract of land from heavy manufacturing to residential, thus handing big landholders in Torrance one of the worst political 'beatings' in recent history.

A tract of 300 single family residences is planned on the site which is located southeast of the intersection of Hawthorne and Sepulveda Blvds.

Councilman Harvey E. Spelman Jr. threw a verbal spear at owners of big undeveloped tracts of land warning them: "I think industry should be in the north end as much as we can keep it there."

Then looking in the direction of representatives of the Santa Fe Railroad and the Standard Oil Co., Spelman said: "I think it is important for large land owners in the City of Torrance to learn a lesson from this experience. Certain large property owners have been very, very hard to live with for a long time. The city is growing in spite of you gentlemen. It is on its way."

The one dissenting vote was cast by Mayor Mervin Schwab, who told the audience he was voting against the zone change and explained his position.

"When I took office I pledged that I would vote as the dictates of my heart. I feel that this change of zone is wrong. The Torrance of the future will not be better because we have prevented industrial development of this property. It is ridiculous to state that there is no land in Torrance available for new home construction. Another thing, it has been rumored that I have been subjected to pressure on this matter. I have not been pressured from either side. I feel strongly that we are doing wrong in rezoning this property and consequently am voting against the zone change."

Councilman Willys Blount charged that he could not make the same claim as the mayor. "I was pressured. And real tough, too! I was told that if I voted for this zone change that I would be removed from the council. I might warn you gentlemen you are about to lose your council jobs."

Members of the city council serve without pay. Speaking against the zone change was L. J. LeRoy, industrial land agent for the Santa Fe Railway and one of the targets of Councilman Spelman's barbed remarks. The Santa Fe fought the zone change holding out for big industry which might someday locate on the property. The rail company serves the area with a rail spur and was hopeful that a large freight-shipping industry would eventually build in the area.

Donald A. Nielson, a representative of the Standard Oil Co., told the council that if it elected to rezone the 55-acre tract it would be a demonstration of poor zoning.

"Torrance will not continue to be a growing industrial city, as your Chamber of Commerce posters claim, if you continue to snipe at zoning," he told the council.

Donald Armstrong, local attorney, pleading the case for the proponents of the zone change, presented a number of letters from local business, industrial, and ministers beseeching the council to grant the zone change.

Sylvester Morning, developer of the proposed tract, said that he now homes would bring many advantages to the city which the opponents of the rezoning plan had failed to point out. "With new homes," Morning told the city fathers, "some new markets, new stores, and a continual flow of dollars into the city treasury through sales tax."

His last address was a POW Camp No. 2 in Chinese People's Committee for World Peace Peking, China.

Booked by police on child molesting charges, Campoy denied committing the offense alleged by the child but pled guilty on the assault and vagrancy charges, and is being held in lieu of \$500 bail.

Police said that Campoy, who had been working as a cement mason on a housing tract here, was visiting with friends at 215th and Earl Sts. across from where the little girl lived with her grandparents.

The incident occurred on an empty lot in front of the little girl's home Sunday evening about 7, investigating officers said. The girl broke away from Campoy and ran into her house. A neighbor of the girl's grandparents called police after she "saw a man hurting their little girl."

In the meantime, police said, Campoy had pulled a knife and brandished it in front of his friends, telling them that he would hurt the child's grandparents if they called police. Twice, it was reported, Campoy had to be forcibly detained by his friends from crossing the street and entering the grandparents' home.

(Continued on Page 2)

Man Denies He Molested Girl, 6, Pleads Guilty To Assault Charge

## Claim Local POW Quote: Well and Happy, Unquote

A former Torrance High School student, now a prisoner of war in North Korea, was reported "well and happy" by a liberated POW, Sgt. Ernest Contreras, who returned to his Denver, Colorado, home this week.

Among 11 veterans he said he had behind in a prison camp was Pfc. Danny Arellano, 19, whose sister, Mrs. Dora Camou lives at 230 Arlington Ave.

Mrs. Camou last heard from her brother on April 18 when she received a letter from him written from POW Camp No. 2 on February 5. Pfc. Arellano was sent overseas in July of 1950 and on December 2 was declared missing in action. A short time later he was verified as a prisoner of war.

His last address was a POW Camp No. 2 in Chinese People's Committee for World Peace Peking, China.