

Nut Behind Wheel May Be Cause Of Many Holiday Traffic Crashes

By ROY O. GILBERT, M.D.
L.A. County Health Officer

That the number of deaths due to automobile accidents in Los Angeles County will be distressingly high during this Christmas week-end is the prediction of many safety experts.

Should this prediction be correct—and in the face of the daily accident rate there is little reason to question it—the coming holiday season will bring death or injury to many persons in this area who are now alive and well.

It was once said that the part of a car most commonly defective is the nut behind the

wheel. To be sure, there are very few individuals who are free of all the driving faults that may cause accidents but the majority of such accidents occur because too many drivers are addicts of high speed, are reckless in the extreme, and believe that they are the exceptions who can take a drink or two without suffering any impairment of judgment.

Lives Threatened

It is a well-known fact that a great many people are generally stimulated by the use of intoxicants at the Christmas season, as well as by the holiday spirit. When people in

this condition drive a car they are a menace to every automobile or pedestrian they encounter. And the heavier the traffic, the greater this menace is likely to be.

There is a good deal of discussion about the lack of safety factors in motor car design, while accident prevention has been somewhat pushed into the background. Such innovations as pop-out windshields, padded dashboards, and collapsible steering wheels have been proposed as possible ways of reducing the number of maimed and dead. Reports indicate that a considerable num-

ber of drivers already use safety belts.

Safety Belt?

However, as one individual who had a safety belt installed some time ago said, "I notice recently that I drive faster and take just a few more chances since I have the protection of the belt." This person may not be typical but, on the other hand, he may be.

There is certainly a good deal of merit in many of the proposals for redesigning the frame and interior of automobiles to provide greater safety, but the recent emphasis on making accidents as "safe as possible" is a capitulation to

what might well be termed "crash psychology." And naturally no built-in safety feature of cars will help to protect the innocent victims of traffic accidents and the pedestrians.

Too Many Horses?

It may be that much of our criticism of Detroit's automotive engineers for concentrating on horsepower rather than safety is the result of our own frustrations in dealing with the problem of traffic fatalities.

Human beings have a long history of piling blame on scapegoats to relieve themselves of guilt. It should never be forgotten or minimized that 90 per cent of all traffic accidents are caused by drivers rather than defects in cars.

It might well be that one way to reduce the number of

Thieves Cop Student Work

Four student projects were stolen by thieves who broke into the woodshop at Torrance High School, police reported Monday.

The burglars carried away two large cedar chests, a cedar jewel box and a record cabinet, all of which were virtually completed by their builders. Officers said entry was gained by breaking a window on a door to the shop.

Christmas season automobile accidents and thus materially reduce the number of injured and dead would be for all drivers to exaggerate, even in a modest way, the ordinary courtesies of the road.

The North Hi Breeze

By LEILA SANTOR

From the many comments of the Saxons who attended, "Stardust and Snowflakes" was a real dreamy affair and everyone had a lot of fun.

The Girls' League deserves many congratulations for the Winter Formal which they sponsored at the same time as their annual Christmas program.

The Student Government Orientation program is in full swing.

Student Council continues to present a mock "unruly" meeting and a model council

meeting for homeroom classes to study in order that they might understand what Student Government involves and how North High's Student Council operates.

"The Nativity," the Girls' League Christmas assembly, was one of the most beautiful programs ever presented at North High.

Held in the cafeteria, in four performances, the assembly consisted of six tableaux telling the story of "The Nativity." The choir, led by George Zavislan, and the orchestra, directed by Martin Baum, provided the effective background of Christmas carols.

Saxons are learning all the tricks of tumbling in the newly organized gymnastics club. Coach and sponsor, Joseph Predisk, has already started plans for aud calls and other entertainments.

Membership, which is continually growing, is now above 50.

"We are hoping, in the future, to be great enough in number, and also good enough to present a complete gymnastic circus," stated Predisk.

"Froehliche Weihnachten und ein Glueckliches Never Jahr," as Christa Volkmann, AFS exchange student from Austria, would say.

SCHOOLS EYING HIKE IN TAXES

Los Angeles City School District voters may be asked to approve the raising of the system's maximum tax ceiling by 65 cents at the citywide elections slated for April 2, as a result of a proposal now being studied by the City Board of Education.

The recommendation, submitted to the Board of Education by Superintendent of Schools Ellis A. Jarvis on Thursday, seeks Board approval to place two propositions on the April ballot.

One proposition would up the elementary school maximum tax rate—now \$1.10—by 20 cents and the other proposition would increase the high school tax rate—now 90 cents—by 45 cents. It would bring the elementary school maximum to \$1.30 and the secondary school ceiling to \$1.35 for each \$100 of assessed valuation.

If approved these increases would up the total tax ceiling for Los Angeles' three school district—elementary, high school, and junior college—to an even \$3. The present junior college tax ceiling of 35 cents would not be affected, since the system at present is using only slightly more than half of it.

39 Disease Cases Found

Thirty-nine cases of disease, 12 of them in Torrance, were reported in the Torrance Health District for the two-week period ending Dec. 8, according to the County Health Department.

Scarlet fever claimed eight victims in the area, four of whom live in Torrance. Measles and tuberculosis each claimed seven persons.

Other diseases reported include hepatitis, five; epilepsy, four; gonorrhea, three; polio, two; and mumps, syphilis, tubercular disease, and salmonella, each one.

Hock, Stone Complete Marine Combat Course

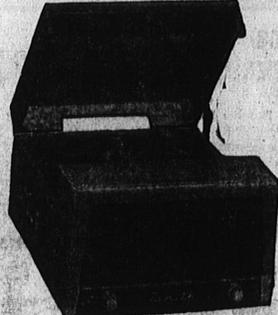
Pvt. Martin J. Hock, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Bird, 22225 Moneta Ave., and Pvt. Robert J. Stone, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Stone, 302 E. Carson St., completed four weeks of individual combat training Nov. 24 at the Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The course of instruction at this huge training base included the latest infantry tactics; first aid, demolitions, field fortifications, and advanced schooling in weapons.

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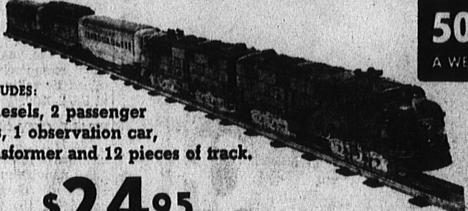


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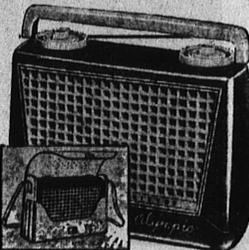


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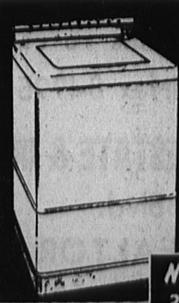
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