

Burglars Ransack Several Torrance Homes

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Torrance

Press-Herald

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THE CRIME BEAT

Thieves Get Tools, Cash From Homes

A number of Torrance homes were entered during the past few days, a clerk on her way to work was accosted by two teen-age punks as she left her car at an adjacent parking lot, and a seaman told police he had been robbed and dumped on a Torrance street.

Manager W. F. LeFure of Woolworth in the Del Amo Center, told officers Monday that someone had taken more than \$1,000 from the firm after drilling through the steel door of the store safe.

Det. J. E. Davis and Al Winkler said the thief apparently spent part of his weekend in the store drilling through the steel door.

JOHN LEMAY of 3424 Cricklewood St., complained that someone had broken into a garage at 24001 Neece Ave. and took a high pressure water pump valued at about \$700.

Alpha Renz, secretary at the Torrance YMCA, found that building at 2080 Washington Ave., had been entered while she was out to dinner Monday evening. She said keys to a storeroom and for some of the YMCA vehicles were taken.

MRS. DOROTHY Palmer of 2110 Middlebrook Road, said someone ransacked her

home while she was away over the weekend. Among the items taken were a sewing machine, record player, 21-inch television, linen, clothing, and costume jewelry. She placed the value of the loss at \$400.

William R. Heinlein, 4223 W. 178th St., said someone entered his home while the family was away and took a box containing a coin collection, including some Kennedy half dollars. No search of other parts of the home was apparent.

MRS. VALEA PESCAR, 3115 Merrill Dr., complained that someone broke into her frozen meat locker and made off with steaks and roasts valued at \$210. Not only that, she said the thief left the lid to the freezer open, ruining another \$40 worth of meat.

Harold Willert, 3110 Merrill Dr., reported about the same time that someone had tried to pry open his automobile, but police did not establish a connection between that and the meat thefts.

Herbert Moen, 2718 W. 181st St., said someone entered a garage workroom at his home and removed hand tools valued at \$300.

No loss was reported, although Ann Lisby, 3618 W. 181st St., said someone thoroughly ransacked her home while she was away Tuesday.

Don McRae, a route salesman, reported that someone entered his truck while it was in a garage at 802 Sartori Ave., and removed blankets, a toaster, clock radios, and other items valued at more than \$100.

THE VICTIM of a strong-arm robbery was Alma L. Davis, 22009 Ocean Ave., who is employed at the J. C. Penney Co. on the Del Amo Center.

After she had locked her car on the way to work Monday afternoon, boys described as 17 and 18 stepped up beside her, grabbed her purse, and ran off among the cars on the huge shopping center parking lot, she told police. The loss was placed at \$11.40 in cash plus personal papers, cards, and other items in her purse.

Seaman Albert Gapinski, 41, of Carnegie, Pa., told police he was robbed of \$685 by a man he knew only as "Bill."

Gapinski, a merchant seaman from the Flying Clipper docked in Wilmington said he was picked up by "Bill" at a Lomita bar and was taken near Arlington and 233rd Street, hit on the head, and robbed, he said.

Two Boys Burned in Car Blaze

Two small Torrance boys were critically burned Tuesday in a car fire which broke out which the youngsters were waiting for their mother to return from the doctor's office.

John and Noel Pulver were taken to Harbor General Hospital with burns over 50 per cent of their bodies.

The two youngsters were in the back seat of their family car, which was parked in the 1200 block of Gardena. Their mother, Mrs. Rose Pulver, 43, had stopped to see her doctor.

A service station attendant who was not identified saw the flames and called a fellow worker. The two men put out the fire with an extinguisher before firemen arrived.

The fire apparently broke out while John, 15 months, and Noel, 4, were playing with matches.

The father, Russell, 35, had just been dropped off at work by Mrs. Pulver. Both parents were reported in shock.

Over Challengers

King, Bell Take Commanding Leads

No upsets were in the making early today as Torrance area incumbents watched their vote totals pile up winning margins in Congressional and Assembly races.

With about one half of the precincts reporting, Congressman Cecil King had taken a strong 2-to-1 lead over his Republican challenger,

Robert Muncaster in the 17th District.

Republican Congressman Alphonse E. Bell had taken a commanding lead over Democrat Jerry Gottlieb in his race for re-election in the 28th Congressional District.

Details of the local Assembly races were not available at closing time for the Press-Herald this morning.

Rescue Efforts Futile; Two Killed in Cave-in



RESCUE EFFORTS . . . Torrance firemen begin pumping water from a construction ditch in the 3500 block of Torrance Boulevard in which two men lost their lives Monday morning. The ditch was flooded, then caved in, when a water main ruptured while the two men were working in the nine-foot trench. Firemen were able to pump the ditch clear only when Dominguez Water Corp. officials turned off the water main. (Press-Herald Photo)



RECOVER VICTIM . . . The body of Jesus Manuel Alvarado, 25, of Compton, is removed from the construction ditch in which he died when a water main suddenly ruptured and flooded the ditch. Alvarado's body was recovered after nearly two hours of frantic work by Torrance police and fire department personnel Monday. A second victim, Rudolfo Felix Gastelum, 34, of Lomita, was removed from the ditch some time later. (Press-Herald Photo)

Community Newspapers Win Watson's Praises

Taxes Hold Threat to Ownership

Taxation is causing home ownership to come to an end, members of the Torrance-Lomita Board of Realtors heard at a luncheon meeting from George C. Jordan, founding director of Taxation, Inc.

Taxation, Inc., is a Los Angeles area organization created to fight growing taxation and the threat it poses to the average taxpaying citizen, Jordan said.

"Continually increasing property taxes, year after year, are reaching the point where home ownership will soon become economically impossible for the middle class family with an average income," he said.

A great part of the nation's cultural, political, and philosophical heritage is founded on the premises of a large home-owning middle-class society. Also, home ownership is the foundation of pride of ownership, and the stability of community life from coast to coast, he said.

Jordan also told approximately 300 members of the Torrance-Lomita Board of Realtors that taxes are increasing faster than population and faster than incomes, and there is no countering pressure at work.

He outlined for Realtors the mechanics and goals of Taxation in its role of fighting growing taxation in Los Angeles County.

County Assessor Phil Watson praised community newspapers for their help in raising the level of community awareness of his duties and responsibilities of his Department in the complex local property tax structure.

Addressing a group of community newspaper publishers at the Los Angeles Press Club, Watson said he was convinced that public interest in property tax problems was at an all-time high.

"My mail reflects the fact that the public is really aroused at the spiraling property taxes and is demanding that some action be taken to implement my proposal to put a two per cent ceiling on taxes in relation to market value," he said.

Watson attributed this new public awareness to the extensive coverage given his policies and procedures on a continuing basis by the community press, and also to the way the press handled the first-time publication of assessments this year.

The Assessor outlined his legislative program for the 1965 session—an end to the tax on household furnishings, a statewide standard ratio, and a two per cent ceiling on property taxes in relation to market value — and urged support for these measures.

Commenting on the new Tax Appeals Boards, the Assessor said he felt the boards had got off to a good start. Board members are taking their responsibilities seriously, he said, and taxpayers are receiving more time to state their cases.

Cancer Society Set For New Follow-Ups

Local volunteers of the American Cancer Society are discovering that "time marches on"—and in double time!

Mrs. Reed Pack, Epidemiology Chairman of the Society's Centinela Valley-South Bay District announced today that they are beginning their fifth round of follow-up calls in the Society's mammoth statistical study of the possible relationship of human living habits to cancer.

"For 378 volunteers," she said, "it seems as if the study began a short time ago." Only one more round of follow-ups—in October, 1965

will be necessary for completion of the study, which involves 4,500 participants in Centinela Valley-South Bay and more than 1,000,000 people in the United States.

Valuable information already has emerged from the study. At the conclusion of the second year, a preliminary analysis showed that certain danger signals of cancer had a high relationship to deaths from the disease, and that certain general physical complaints—such as loss of appetite, shortness of breath, and tendency to fatigue easily—also were related to the cancer death rate.

Lomita Father Killed

Flooded Ditch Traps Workers

By JERRY REYNOLDS
Press-Herald Staff Writer

Two construction workers were killed Monday morning when a water main suddenly ruptured in the 3500 block of Torrance Boulevard, flooding the trench in which they were working with tons of water and silt.

The dead men were identified as Rudolfo Felix Gastelum, 34, of 1805 W. 246th St., Lomita, and Jesus Manuel Alvarado, 25, of 444 W. Peach St., Compton.

An investigation into the cause of the water main break is now being conducted by the Torrance Police Department.

Torrance firemen worked for nearly four hours Monday before recovering the bodies of both victims. Alvarado's body was removed from the trench at 11:50 a.m., nearly two hours after the accident. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Gastelum's body was finally recovered about 2 p.m., some four hours after the first alarm had been received. Recovery efforts were hampered at first by the water, then by silt which one police officer said was "like concrete."

Alvarado and Gastelum were laying sewer pipe in the trench, some 12 feet deep, when the water main broke and suddenly flooded the trench with tons of water and silt. The force of the water created a quicksand effect and pulled the men from the hands of would-be rescuers.

Sam Omatsu, who hurried from his liquor store at 3539 Torrance Blvd., told investigating officers he had his hands on one of the two men, but was unable to hold him because of the force of the water.

LODDY POPOVICH, foreman of the project, said he and another worker reached down and grabbed hold of one of the men. "We held him until the water rose over his head," (Continued on A-4)

LATE HALLOWEEN

Masked Bandits Rob Drive-In

A Carson restaurant suffered some after-effects of Halloween late Sunday evening when two young bandits robbed McDonald's Drive-In at 1452 W. Carson St. of \$1,100.

The two bandits surprised three employees in the parking lot about 11:50 p.m. and forced them back into the restaurant as the building was being closed for the evening.

Both of the robbers carried revolvers and wore red polka dotted Halloween masks and brown cotton work gloves.

Harold J. Crowe, manager of the restaurant, told sheriff's deputies. Inside the store, the two robbers forced five employees to lie face down on the floor, then forced Crowe to open the safe. After working the safe combination three times without success, one of the bandits jabbed his gun in Crowe's face and told him "Take your time and do it right." Crowe opened the safe on the next try.

After all currency and coins in the safe were emptied into a paper bag, the bandits forced the employees to hand over their wallets—getting an additional \$21.

The bandits were described as in their early 20s with light short hair. They were wearing polished cotton jackets and pants. The pair fled through the rear door of the

restaurant, but no car was seen.

Pete Hornig told the officers he was approached by the bandits while getting into his car. One of the men shoved a gun into his face and said, "Get inside. This is a holdup."

Ray Thomas and Milton Munyer were herded into the building with Hornig. Crowe, James Barta, and Jim Rorey were still inside when the bandits entered.

Oilers Get Bowl Bid - - -

The Torrance Oilers, champions of the pee wee division of Pop Warner Football Association, have received an invitation to play in the Disneyland Bowl Saturday, Nov. 28. Details on the bowl bid are in today's Press-Herald sports section, Page D-1. Other regular features you'll want to read today include Count Marco and Ann Landers, page C-1, and Art Hoppe, page C-4.

Douglas Pay Boosted - - -

A 1-cent-an-hour pay hike became effective Monday for 27,300 Douglas Aircraft Co. hourly employees as a result of an increase in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' national cost-of-living index. Hourly employees are granted the pay hike under terms of collective bargaining agreements.

Council Meets Tonight - - -

City Councilmen will convene tonight at 5:30 for their regular weekly session. The council did not meet last night because state law prohibits municipal meetings on election days.