

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Three of the five National Transportation Safety Board members criticized a fourth, the chairman, in a personal letter obtained by the St. Petersburg Times in September. According to the letter, Chairman Ellen Engleman Connors was getting too political (the board is supposedly non-partisan) and too controlling (the board is traditionally quite collegial), and the Times reported that members and staffers had complained privately that Engleman Connors would sometimes call them in advance of public meetings to negotiate clothing, in order to discourage outfits that would clash with her own.

■ Two months ago, News of the Weird reported on computer technology that would permit quasi-insertive sexual intercourse by a remote user (the Simulator). In just a short step from that, hunter John Underwood announced in November that he had set up the equipment for "hunters" to fire a rifle over the Internet at deer, antelope and wild pigs on his 330-acre ranch near San Antonio, Texas (but opposition is mounting, and state regulators may step in, although current law is said to be written in a way that could not cover Internet hunting). Underwood would provide animal retrieval and shipping services, and said his business would be especially valuable for disabled sportsmen.

TODAY IN HISTORY

In 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and six other Japanese war leaders were executed in Tokyo.

In 1968, 82 crew members of the U.S. intelligence ship "Pueblo" were released by North Korea, 11 months after they had been captured.

In 1980, a state funeral was held in Moscow for former Premier Alexei N. Kosygin, who had died Dec. 18 at age 76.

In 1986, the experimental airplane "Voyager," piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager, completed the first non-stop, non-refueled, round-the-world flight as it landed safely at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It ain't no use putting up your umbrella till it rains."

ALICE CALDWELL RICE
AMERICAN AUTHOR (1870-1942)

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Chief backs new plan for gang violence

Community 'think tank' to address ongoing problem

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

POLICE HDQRTS. — A new approach to quelling gang violence in Santa Monica is the most comprehensive the city has seen in

years, Police Chief James T. Butts Jr. said this week.

The City Council-backed plan calls for a community meeting early next year, with participants from local businesses, as well as religious and nonprofit organizations. The meeting will be directed by City Hall, and also include representatives from the police department, school district and

community college.

"What I think is more comprehensive is the attempt to bring more voices to the table to discuss the issue, to actually see if responsibility for different components needed for success can be identified," Butts said.

"Basically this is going to be a forum where different viewpoints are going to be heard, different

materials are going to be put forth for people to consider. The context for the problem is going to be presented, from a policing perspective and from a community health perspective," he added.

The eastside Santa Monica Pico neighborhood long has been the most violent and crime-plagued area of the city, and the Santa

See **GANGS**, page 5

Checking it twice ...



John Wood/Daily Press

During a lull between visitors, Pat Armstrong, left, and Victoria Ransom pick out gifts for the child of a Salvation Army bell ringer as part of an annual gift-giving program sponsored by the Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary of Santa Monica. Money to purchase the estimated 1,000 gifts given to low-income families was raised in a September fashion show at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel.

Fluoride in Santa Monica water delayed

Bids for controversial project far exceed City Hall's budget

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — When it comes to fluoridating the drinking water in Santa Monica, officials have learned almost nothing follows the status quo.

A 2001 decision to fluoridate drinking water throughout the city was dealt a setback this fall when developers over bid the estimated \$1.2 million project by as much as \$1 million. In response, the City Council agreed to waive the formal bidding requirements and seek out a contractor on the open market.

Doing that required two-thirds approval from the council, and a small but vocal group of activists turned out before the vote last week to reiterate their distaste for the project. While proponents claim fluoridation helps keep teeth strong, opponents liken it to forced medication and say the health benefits are dubious.

See **FLUORIDE**, page 6

Parking violators donate toys to cover fines in Vancouver

By The Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Parking violators lined up before dawn, some bringing lawn chairs, eager for a chance to pay their fines with teddy bears, dolls and other toys.

Mike Deverra, a waiter, said Monday he made his first toy store shopping spree to cover \$800 (US\$652) in fines in Impark's holiday drive. People who failed to pay or didn't pay enough for parking could pay the value of the fine in children's gifts to the Salvation Army.

"I worked at a restaurant in an office tower and would always park in the lot below. The meter would run out before my shift was up. I moved and the collection notices were being sent to my old address. It really added up," Deverra said.

Impark's effort to help disadvantaged children may have earned the parking lot operator some new friends but not all were won over.

"I absolutely loathe Impark. I'd rather have a child have a toy than give any more money to Impark," said Stephanie Jewell, slamming a toy down on the donation table.

"They are not a community-based organization, and they're generally a royal pain in the neck."

"You are guilty until proven innocent, which really annoys me. You can never get through to anyone in customer service. If you make a mistake with one of their parking machines, you're considered in the wrong, even though it's their machine."

Still, workers on the receiving end were happy.

"These are all people who sit on the phone all day and listen to customer complaints," said Corey Medgyesi, Impark's manager of

parking enforcement and collections. "They've all got bigger smiles on their faces today than they usually do at work."

Also participating were Impark offices in Kelowna, Kamloops and Prince George, all in partnership with the Salvation Army, which will distribute the toys.

"This is corporate social responsibility in action," Salvation Army spokesman John Murray said. "We certainly celebrate that and obviously the community does too. There are literally thousands of toys here that will make a difference in the lives of so many kids this season."



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**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**

★★★★★ Indulge one special person in the morning. Many of you will take off for the holidays or are already in the holiday spirit. Share the good will and caring associated with the season rather than the materialism. Tonight: Play holiday music.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**

★★★★★ Others seek you out. You might be taken aback by all the attention. If you need to complete an important project, screen your calls. Deal with an associate quietly and individually, perhaps over a lengthy lunch. Tonight: Work on cuddling.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**

★★★★ Deal with your errands and projects in the morning. Schedule socializing, networking and meetings for later in the afternoon. You cannot avoid the party atmosphere. Don't fight the inevitable. Tonight: Enjoy your many friends.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**

★★★ Use your imagination, and whatever you touch will have that special quality. Others notice the difference. News from a distance might cause a swift change of plans. Your adaptability surges forward. Tonight: Finish up last-minute details.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

★★★★ You might be slow getting started, but are a veritable whirlwind later in the day. You could be a bit wild and overindulgent as the holiday comes on. Some might party away, while others spend a bit too much. Tonight: Romp as if it were the weekend.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**

★★★ In the morning, you are far more effective than later on. Plan on using the remainder of the day to wrap presents, take a nap or complete important work. Screen calls if you want to complete what you have in mind. Tonight: Visit with a special friend.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)**

★★★★★ Finish off last-minute details. Clear off your desk. Work on completing projects rather than initiating them. You see someone in a different light because of what he or she says. Keep mum and observe. Visit with friends. Tonight: Get into the holiday spirit.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**

★★★★ Use the morning for key actions; you are more than up to snuff. You barrel through work, errands or anything else you need to do. Someone might be critical or touchy. Let it go. You or a friend might feel pressured about exchanging gifts. Talk about what is going on. Tonight: Balance your checkbook.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**

★★★★★ You might be slow to get moving, but once you do, you are a veritable whirlwind. Energy and new approaches mark your work and personal life. A family member or boss continues to be unpredictable. You cannot change this person. Tonight: As you like it.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**

★★★ In the morning, socialize and focus on what you want. Bring cookies to work or to friends' homes. Demands surround your afternoon and evening, so much so that you might want to hide out. Do some gift-wrapping. Finish off last-minute details. Catch a nap. Tonight: Do your thing.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**

★★★★ Touch base with a boss or an older relative before you start planning your day. Whatever you decide, you are naturally effusive and content. Your mood affects others, cheering on those who might be having a difficult time with the holidays. Tonight: You are the party, wherever you are.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**

★★★★ Put last-minute cards and packages in the mail before it is too late — which it might be already! Call those at a distance and let them know you haven't forgotten them. Last-minute work demands your attention. Clear your desk. Tonight: Forget an early bedtime.

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LOCAL



Precious package



Photo by Kathleen Lantos/William Edwards Photography

Santa Claus delivered an early present for Santa Monica residents Tatiana Blackington James, Todd James and son Nicholas, with the arrival of Luke, born on Dec. 21 at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center. Luke weighed in at 7 pounds, 1 ounce. Santa Claus visited Santa Monica-UCLA's maternity center on Tuesday to take photos with proud parents and their precious bundles of joy.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Firm bucks up for homeless center

By Daily Press staff

For more than 20 years, through the generosity of CEO Joan Payden, the staff of Payden & Rygel has participated in procuring essential resources and Christmas gifts for St. Joseph Center clients at holiday time. This year was no exception. On Dec. 6, 22 of the firm's 150 employees participated in a charitable shopping spree that benefited more than 1,000 homeless and low-income persons, providing food, household items, clothing, baby supplies, games and toys.

Payden & Rygel is a global investment management firm headquartered in Los Angeles with offices in London and Frankfurt.

"Thanks to the caring and generous spirit of Payden & Rygel, countless men, women, and children facing severe deprivations are blessed this season with gifts and substantial food for their holiday needs," says Rhonda Meister, the center's executive director. "It was a delight to see the eagerness of their staff members, as they came in from their shopping expedition and unloaded the trucks that were filled to capacity."

St. Joseph Center assists more than 7,000 working poor and homeless adults and children, veterans, and seniors each year to achieve self-sufficiency through food distributions, child care, mentoring, and job training.

See BRIEFS, page 7



SURF REPORT

The P-block is in full effect. For the rest of you, Thursday will start off on the slow side. Look for mostly knee- to waist-high waves for the average winter spots throughout the region — with the smallest surf in the North County and locally.

The South Bay will have some chest-high+ sets in the morning as the tide backs down. New long-period WNW swell (280-295) fills in slowly through the afternoon. Look for some new shoulder-high+ waves showing at the best South Bay winter NW breaks by the end of the day. This swell builds overnight and peaks on Friday. Conditions are looking good. Gustly E-NE winds 10-20 knots are expected in the morning with lighter offshore in the afternoon.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

Today the water is:

59°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	9:17	2.3	9:18	0.6	3:28	4.6	2:38	3.1
SUNDAY	10:44	1.7	10:10	1.1	4:17	5.0	4:12	3.7
MONDAY	11:50	1.0	10:57	1.5	4:59	5.3	5:38	3.5
TUESDAY	12:42	0.4	11:40	1.9	5:37	5.6	6:48	3.5
WEDNESDAY	N/A	N/A	1:25	-0.1	6:11	5.8	7:45	3.5
THURSDAY	12:19	2.1	2:03	-0.4	6:43	6.0	8:32	3.6
FRIDAY	12:53	2.3	2:37	-0.6	7:14	6.1	9:13	3.6

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The Q Line

City officials have proposed opening a sobering center, or "drunk tank," to help curb the problem of public drunkenness in Santa Monica. Some officials champion the idea as a way to save the city money and address its homelessness problem. Others say the plan would do little to reduce vagrancy in the area.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know,

"Do you think a sobering center in Santa Monica is a good idea? Why or why not?"

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your response in the weekend edition. Please limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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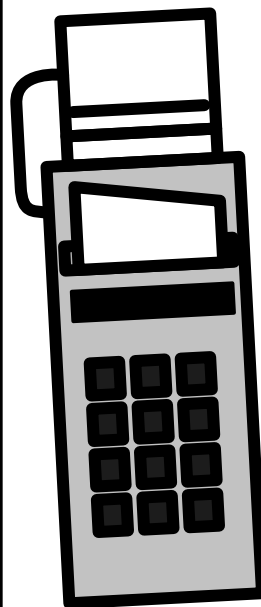
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gas pedal vs. brake pedal an important distinction

Editor:
Regarding the front page article “Senior citizen crashes truck through store,” (SMDP, Dec. 22). The article states, “The 84-year-old driver, whose identity is not being released, apparently hit the gas pedal instead of the brake at about 8:40 a.m.”

In every one of the incidents we read about involving a senior (of whom I am one), none of them can seem to tell the difference between the gas and the brake pedals. Anyone behind the wheel of a large, metal projectile should be able to make the distinction. This is a pretty dangerous case of mistaken identity. It would be comical if the results were not so tragic. When a person loses their ability to judge their own incapacity, someone in the family should see to it that these dangerous drivers be curtailed. As a senior, I am all for testing at least every six months to see if the reaction time is there and their capability to distinguish between pedals is intact.

Before anyone moans about their rights being ignored, ask Mr. Weller’s numerous victims how their rights, their health, their very lives were interfered with by Mr. Weller as he rampaged through a crowded Santa Monica Farmers’ Market in July of 2003.

As for the current senior crashing through the lumber company, thank God no one was injured or killed by this person who probably shouldn’t have been driving, especially if he didn’t know the difference between two very important pedals. And instead of withholding his identity, please withhold his license to kill ... I mean drive.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica

... And all through the White House

Editor:
‘Twas the night before Christmas, and throughout the White House
Not a Congressman was stirring, after my energy rouse;
My energy stocks were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that LNG soon would be there;

The FERC were all nestled and snug in their beds,
While visions of LNG danced in their heads;
And Laura in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled down for a election victory night cap,

When on the White House lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
To the window I flew like an oil soaked bird,
And opened the shutters to see what I heard.

The moon was non-reflective on the polluted snow,
Gave the lure of midnight to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
A LNG tanker pulled by eight large OPEC-deer.

With a little old Captain, so crafty and shady,
I knew in a moment it must be Dick Cheney.
More rapid than lobbyist, his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

“Now, LIBYA! now, EGYPT! now, VENEZUELA and OMAN!
On, QATAR! on NIGERIA! on, TRINIDAD and YEMAN!
To the top of Congress! to the top of the GAO Wall!
Now vaporize! vaporize! vaporize all!”

The flammable cloud travels as a hurricane flies,
They refuse to listen to opponents and work with the bad guys,
So up to Congress the coursers they flew,
With the LNG tanker, and Dick Cheney too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard from the LNG lobby,
The prancing and pawing of each greedy little body.
As I drew in my hand, and was turning around,
Down Pennsylvania Ave. Dick Cheney came with a bound.

He was dressed all in mink, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A pale of LNG he had flung on the lawn,
And was astonished as it ignited the sky into dawn.

His eyes — how they squinted! his energy pals not so merry!
Calling his energy plan rosy, however everyone worried!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as black as the snow;

The majority of Congress he held tight in his teeth,
And a potential of flames encircling the tanker like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a threatening smile,
And made everyone wish he would move to the Nile.

He was chubby and plump, a right crafty old man,
And I laughed because I knew he had The Energy Plan.
A wink of his eye and a twist of my arm,
And I knew that some citizens may possibly be harmed;

His Energy Task Force was his secretive duty,
Where he could scheme for his energy pals and the booty,
He scratched his head and placed his thumb up his nose,
And giving a nod, to the Supreme Court he rose;

He sprang to his tanker, to the FERC gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
“TOUGH COOKIES LNG PORTS, AND TO ALL A SCARY-NIGHT!”

Comment: I apologize to the author Major Henry Livingston Jr. for using his joyful poem to make a satirical political statement.

Tony Spadaccini
Administrator, LNG Community Focus

Going home for the holidays is what it’s all about



**HIP TO
BE SQUARE**

BY CAROLINE BODKIN

The time we set aside each year to go home for the holidays is sacred. It is the one moment in an otherwise overwhelmingly busy year that nothing can be more important than gathering your people, for better or worse, and spending time together.

Good, bad, joyous or difficult, it is yours. To mend gaps, remember memories and make new ones with family and your closest friends, old and new. There is something so crucial about reinforcing the bonds you have with people you love. I’m a sentimental fool, but I think it’s nice that there’s a season dedicated to doing just that.

And while taking time out to go home isn’t always easy — life flies by all year and by the end, the thought of mustering enough energy to gather up gifts and trek back seems impossible — it’s worth it.

Two weeks before I was to leave town, I

got a phone call from one of my best and oldest friends, Noel. She called to tell me about the birth of her second child, a little girl. For 10 minutes we talked excitedly about pudgy fingers and newborn hair, and tried to catch up on the rest but failed. Our answers were honest but abbreviated because phones never suffice when there’s real talking to do.

Frustrated by the inadequacies of telecommunications, we tried to figure out when we could see each other next.

“Well,” I asked. “Are you going home for Christmas?”

After we hung up, I remembered how her family celebrated the holidays. Her parents put up not one but two trees and everything in the house smelled like cinnamon. She and I would make cookies to take to our friends at school and until we were too cool to do so, her mom would take us caroling.

That’s where the memory aches. Noel lost her mom to cancer six years ago. Christmas was the time of year they loved being together most — Noel’s birthday falls on Christmas — and her mother’s absence is deeply felt.

No one would have blamed Noel if she

wanted to ignore the holiday all together. My question was met with a pause, and I immediately regretted asking.

The next day, I went into work, still thinking of Noel. Mid-morning, my thoughts were interrupted by a co-worker giving a whiny speech about the evils of Christmas. She said she’d skipped her family’s Christmas for three years running and had no qualms about it. Shopping’s a pain, she said. Flying is a pain, she said. Cold weather’s a pain, she said.

“My family’s crazy,” she scoffed. “I should take a week off of work to go watch my brother drink too much and listen to my mom complain about how much she misses me? Ha! No way.

“I’d rather send cash and a card.”

By now she had an audience, so she bumped her voice up a notch.

“Don’t you think the whole season is just such a bummer?” she shook her head. “You get a tree only for it to die, you throw a party only to have to clean your house, you put up decorations you’ll just have to take down, you give gifts you know will be returned, you gain weight you’ll never lose, you buy plane tickets

home to see a family you’ll inevitably fight with and for what? For what?”

“No. I’m just not into it. The whole thing’s just ... so pointless.”

The holiday pilgrimage home is voluntary. Our generation doesn’t have the sense of familial duty that generations before us seemed to have had, and people understand when we say, “I can’t make it, I’m sorry.” But when we do stop, in the midst of our busy lives and hectic schedules, to honor the places we came from and the people who helped us become what we are, we are better for it.

Even if it’s hard. Even if it’s inconvenient. Even if it isn’t a bowl of holly and berries. I called Noel back that night to see if she’d made up her mind about coming home.

“Will I see you?” I asked. “We can go caroling.”

There was a pause. She let out a tired sigh and said, “Of course I’ll be there. My brother and sister miss me. They want to see my husband and my little girl. Besides, I want my kids to know how wonderful it can be.

(Reach Caroline Bodkin at hip-tobesquarebybodkin@yahoo.com).

LOCAL

City Hall to spend \$10K on community meeting

GANGS, from page 1

Monica Police Department has overseen a host of efforts to reduce gang activity in it.

Following a midday shooting in front of Edison Elementary this fall, Butts was the target of criticisms from some elected leaders and residents, who complained of a perceived disconnect between police and residents. The tenor of those comments changed dramatically at a meeting of the City Council last week, though some residents who praised the new plan also said it was long overdue.

"For the longest time, as far as I can remember, we've been talking about doing something in the Pico neighborhood. Finally were doing something about it and were not just talking about it," said resident Ana M. Jara, one of more than a dozen members of the public to speak on the issue. "I am a believer that it does take a village to raise a child, and this is definitely the beginning of that village."

Daniel Jordan, a resident of the Pico neighborhood for the last 48 years, agreed. Jordan said he didn't want the current Pico youths to repeat mistakes he made.

"I've been to the state, been through the county, been through all the systems — federal, state, county — did all that," Jordan said. "I come back to my neighborhood, been away for years, I come back and it hurts me. It hurts me ... If you listen to these kids, they're crying for help. They don't have anybody to go to."

"I'm asking you guys as a City Council, what are you guys going to do? How are you going to help my youth? Stop giving them a negative, think of a positive to give them," he added.

Others who spoke to the council had a different message. Darrell Goode, a representative from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP), said his group frequently logs complaints about police officers in Venice and Los Angeles, but rarely do they receive negative comments about Santa Monica officers. Still, Goode said gang violence needs to be addressed.

"I grew up in this community," Goode added. "I've been here all this time and it's sad — I've forgotten many of the names of the funerals I've gone to. It's been so many."

The City Council set aside \$10,000 to host the community working session sometime in late January or early February, according to city documents. The next steps to be taken towards reducing gang violence in Santa Monica will be hammered out then. Community leaders agreed the issue needs to be approached on every possible level, including parenting, early childhood education, nutrition and addressing poverty.

"I really see this is as an important step

forward," City Councilman Richard Bloom said. "This is extraordinary for the community to coalesce around a common agenda and I hope that that is what happens. There's always potential in a process like this that division can occur and I think it's really important for us all to commit here tonight to work together to end this problem, because we won't end it if we end up being divided on it."

No matter how much the city and police do, parents and children need to take responsibility for their own actions, City Councilman Herb Katz said. Katz also emphasized his support for creating more jobs, pointing out he has had paying work since the age of 12, which kept him on "the straight and narrow."

City Councilman Kevin McKeown took the opportunity to push for more affordable housing, saying the city's poorest residents are being forced out of Santa Monica due to escalating rents.

"We have to understand that by the time a young man is on the street holding a gun, we've already not done our job," he said. "Look at the demographics of how we've lost Latino and black youths in the last census period. It's clear we've been failing to provide the housing they need to remain in their own community."

After suggesting that one person be appointed to oversee the issue, City Councilman Bob Holbrook praised work already being done by Santa Monica police. The department operates under what's called a "Neighborhood-Centered Policing" model, with high-ranking officers assigned to work with specific neighborhoods. Holbrook said the proposed plan for a community meeting, detailed in a staff report prepared by City Manager Susan McCarthy, would build upon the department's ongoing efforts.

"Many people in the community believe that gang violence and related crime has been the job of the police department ... and this report talks about and discusses all the ramifications that can cause gang violence," Holbrook said. "It really talks I think about a fresh start. Let's all start (at) the same place. We're trying to solve this problem. It's not in the Pico neighborhood. It's in our Pico neighborhood."

McCarthy agreed to assume the role of point person of what she called a gang violence "think tank," adding the city will try to coordinate efforts with State Sen. Sheila Kuehl, who also plans to host a meeting on the issue. One challenge, McCarthy noted, will be sustaining interest.

"There is no single entity or individual or organization that can make an impact on something that is a broader societal problem," she said. "This is an effort to tap the knowledge and the energy of the broader community, which is what it's going to take to make it end here."

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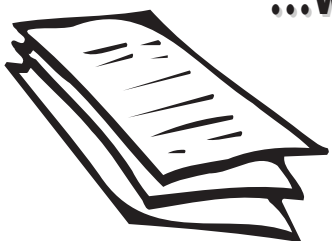
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC FORUM

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST OF SANTA MONICA

SUBJECT: Landmarks exemption/hardship determination per Gov't Code §37361

Address: 505 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica

Government Code Section 37361

Property Owner: First Church of Christ Scientist of Santa Monica

Pursuant to Government Code Section 37361, a public forum will be held by the Building Committee of the First Church of Christ Scientist of Santa Monica to consider the following:

The **First Church of Christ Scientist of Santa Monica** ("Church") plans to demolish the existing improvements at 505 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica, California, including its assembly hall, foyer, Sunday school, church offices and auxiliary rooms. This demolition will make way for the Church's construction of a replacement assembly hall, Sunday school, church offices and auxiliary rooms of smaller size to better suit the congregation, with subterranean parking, at the corner of Fifth Street and Arizona Avenue. The balance of the site going north along Fifth Street will be sold to fund the construction and operation of the smaller house of worship. The reading room at 1227 Fifth Street will remain unaltered. The Church is in the process of determining whether to exempt its existing structures at 505 Arizona Avenue from designation for preservation. This public forum will solicit comments and information from the public concerning whether preservation of the existing 600-seat assembly hall and 375-seat Sunday school and related facilities would cause the Church substantial hardship, which is likely to deprive the Church of economic return on its property, the reasonable use of its property, or the appropriate use of its property in the furtherance of its religious mission. The Church has been located at 505 Arizona Avenue since 1927.

DATE/TIME: TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2005, AT 10:00 A.M.

LOCATION: Best Western Gateway Hotel Santa Monica, first floor conference room 1920 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica, California 90404

HOW TO COMMENT

If you attend the meeting, you can address the Building Committee in person to state your comments. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you may mail your written comments to First Church of Christ Scientist of Santa Monica, 505 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90401, Attn: Building Committee, provided such written comments arrive by January 4, 2005.

BUSINESS □ LOCAL

Money management tips



MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

BY COREY K. QUINN, BRETT A. BROWN

Being a single parent is far from a rarity in the U.S. In fact, one-parent households number in the millions, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Even if another parent provides monetary assistance, single parents often independently make decisions that impact their child's financial security. Here are a few guidelines that may help single parents ensure their family's future.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Discuss finances with your children. Kids today are very aware of their environment. Discussing your finances with them will help them to manage their expectations of what the family can afford.

Live within your budget. An obvious step to saving money is to develop a streamlined budget that still meets your family's needs. This may be as simple as limiting discretionary spending which, for some, can add up to a savings of hundreds of dollars a month.

INITIATE PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Protect your income with long-term disability insurance. A significant number of mortgage foreclosures are the result of loss of income, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Should you become unable to work, long-term disability insurance may be obliged to cover a portion of your salary for an extended period of time. The easiest way to get long-term disability insurance is through your employer. Check the specifics of your company's benefits. You may be covered and not know it.

Update your will. A will ensures that your wishes for your children will be followed instead of being mandated by a state's intestacy statutes. Moreover, assets such as real estate, investments, automobiles and jewelry can add up to a sizable amount. A will can provide guidelines for how you wish your assets to be managed or used to benefit your children.

INCREASE YOUR NET WORTH

Learn about savings and investment opportunities. With the cash you save from your new budget, consider the many savings and investment opportunities available to you. For instance, instead of keeping too much cash in low- or non-interest-paying accounts, you may want to consider the growth opportunities available through a wide variety of mutual funds or tax-deferred investments. These accounts can be incorporated into a college and/or retirement savings plan.

GET PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Your financial advisor can suggest specific strategies tailored for your situation and point out any additional considerations, such as a systematic or dollar-cost averaging plan. That strategy helps you make consistent contributions on a regular basis. A program of systematic investment cannot assure profit or protect against loss in a declining market. Because such a program involves continuous investments regardless of fluctuating share values, investors should consider their financial ability to continue the program through all market cycles.

Being a single parent can be difficult and demanding. However, successfully managing your finances does not have to be.

(Morgan Stanley does not offer tax or legal advice. Consult your tax or legal advisor before making any tax- or legally related investment decisions. This article is published for general informational purposes only and is not an offer or solicitation to sell or buy any securities or commodities. Morgan Stanley is a service mark of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. Services are offered through Morgan Stanley DW Inc., member SIPC. For more information, contact Morgan Stanley financial advisors Corey K. Quinn and Brett A. Brown at their Santa Monica office at (310) 319-5210).

Fluoridation continues to divide community

SCHOOLS, from page 1

"I think that we are tampering with nature, and it's not good," said Marissa Rubin, the last of 11 people to speak against fluoridation.

Eight developers initially showed interest in building the fluoridation system, but only two submitted formal offers. Ecology Construction Inc. pegged the cost at \$1.7 million and Atlas-Allied Inc. valued it at \$2.2 million, according to city staffers, who said both "bids substantially exceed the capital budget for the project."

Council members agreed unanimously to reject the offers and permit City Manager Susan McCarthy to negotiate a contract on the open market, meaning she won't be bound by the formal bidding procedures typically required in government spending. There was no discussion on the merits of fluoridation before the vote.

That wasn't the case in October of 2001

when the controversial plans were first approved, or in subsequent meetings when the divisive issue has surfaced. More than a dozen fluoride opponents spoke out on the matter in January of this year before the council approved a \$300,000 contract for the system's design. Both sides of the fluoride issue cite medical and scientific evidence to support their claims.

While the debate rages on, McCarthy said she will return to the City Council for approval after negotiating a more favorable estimate from a new developer. Construction on the project has been estimated at up to six months. In January, officials projected the system would be up and running by the end of this year.

City utilities manager Gil Borboa has said Santa Monica's drinking water currently contains .2 to .4 parts per million of fluoride. According to government health officials, the purported dental hygiene benefits are optimal at .8 parts per million.

LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

New channels come to cable surfers

By Daily Press staff

Cable subscribers will soon see changes in their television programming. Adelphia has expanded its offering of digital and expanded basic programs as it adds BET on Jazz, Turner Classic Movies, Fit TV, Oxygen, SiTV and Spanish-language channel KBEH-TV, among other changes.

To accommodate the new programming additions, some channel realignments will occur. Customers can log on to www.adelphasocal.com to find the most updated channel line-ups for their neighborhood.

The new channel realignment also includes the addition of unique local public, education and government channels (PEG) for communities that were not carried previously.

KBEH-TV Channel 63 in Los Angeles is a 24-hour Spanish-language family channel whose program mix includes seven hours of children's programming Monday through Friday. In addition, KBEH-TV airs a daily two-hour variety show, a cooking show and talk show for women, music blocks, sports and wildlife programs, and classic and new Mexican movies.

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STATE

Another delay for governor's overhaul of health plan for poor

BY TOM CHORNEAU
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's plan to restructure the state's mammoth health care program for the poor has finally been completed and is expected to be released next month as part of his proposed budget.

But, because the plans have yet to be submitted for federal approval, final action is months away, casting doubt not only on how much the effort might save taxpayers but when the savings will begin.

Medi-Cal, the state's version of the federal Medicaid safety net for the elderly, disabled and low-income children, serves nearly 7 million residents and costs about \$30 billion annually in state and federal dollars.

Virtually since he took office last year, Schwarzenegger has said he wanted to restructure the program to control costs. Since 1999, Medi-Cal costs have jumped 45 percent largely due to an enrollment expansion that added 2 million patients.

Schwarzenegger's proposals have included such ideas as limiting who can qualify for services, requiring patients to contribute a co-payment toward their care as well as trimming the kinds of services that might be made be available.

Last year, administration officials estimated that such changes could save the state as much as \$400 million annually.

Because the federal government is a partner in the program, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services must approve the proposed changes.

Twice before, the governor has pulled back his restructuring program from federal review — once last May and again in August. Both times, the administration said the program was not ready.

Although officials at the California Health and Human Services said their plan is now finished, it has yet not been submitted to federal officials, according to Mary Kahn, spokeswoman for the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare.

Indeed, because of the uncertainty over the status of the restructured program, Schwarzenegger's Finance Director, Tom Campbell, said last week that he is not recommending the governor count on significant savings from the effort as part of next year's budget plan.

Donna Kingwell, spokeswoman for California Health and Human Services Secretary Kim Belshe, said details of the proposed revisions will be released as part of the governor's 2005-2006 budget, which is expected to be made public Jan. 10.

Hospital administrators, physician groups and health care advocates said they are uneasy about the governor's plan because the administration hasn't shared any information about the latest proposal with them.

"We haven't talked to them in months," said Darryl Nixon, spokesman for the California Association of Health Facilities. "Like everyone else, we expected to see the new program with the new budget in January. That's what they said they were going to do when they pulled the plan in August. If it's not coming forward, that's news to us."

Last spring and summer, the administration spent weeks holding public meetings with interest groups about proposed changes to the Medi-Cal system.

Schwarzenegger himself called for simplifying the eligibility process to make it easier to manage. He also said he wanted to promote "personal responsibility" among Medi-Cal clients in deciding whether to seek care.

Toward that end, the administration proposed that imposing higher co-payments and limiting the choices of those who can pay the least. The administration also wanted a more restrictive system for managing care of the blind and disabled.

Rachael Kagan, spokeswoman for the California Association of Public Hospitals, said the stakes are enormous because included among the proposals are new funding mechanisms for hospital reimbursements for Medi-Cal services.

"At issue is \$2 billion in federal money that keeps the doors open of public hospitals that serve the state's uninsured patients," she said. "That's what is being tinkered with."



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NATIONAL



Microsoft fails in court bid to suspend EU ruling

BY RAF CASERT

Associated Press Writer

BRUSSELS, Belgium — A European Union court ruled Wednesday that Microsoft Corp. must immediately divulge some trade secrets to competitors and produce a version of its flagship Windows operating system stripped of the program that plays music and video.

The 91-page ruling effectively thwarts Microsoft's attempt to delay while it appeals the EU's landmark antitrust decision in March that demanded changes in the software giant's business practices.

The implications for Microsoft are huge, though the company did not immediately disclose whether it intended to offer a version of Windows without its Media Player in Europe alone or more broadly. Software that plays media files is increasingly in demand as more consumers get broadband connections to the Internet and use their PCs as entertainment centers.

There is also the question of precisely what computer code Microsoft will share with competitors so those companies' programs work better on networks running Microsoft server software.

EU spokesman Jonathan Todd said the ruling "pre-

serves the effectiveness of antitrust enforcement, in particular in fast-moving markets." He said the changes would benefit consumers by widening their choice of media players and also stimulate innovation.

Microsoft, based in Redmond, Wash., said it would look closely at the order before deciding on its next step but would comply fully with the ruling of the Luxembourg-based European Court of First Instance.

The company said it was encouraged that the ruling "recognized that some of our arguments on the merits of the case are well-founded and may ultimately carry the day when the substantive issues are resolved in the full appeal," which could take up to five years.

But while Microsoft reiterated its desire to resume settlement discussions, EU officials said it was unlikely antitrust regulators would reopen talks. "We are not in the process of renegotiation," Todd said.

Such talks failed to make headway after EU antitrust regulators fined Microsoft a record \$666 million and ordered the other measures. They ruled Microsoft abusively wielded its Windows software monopoly and locked competitors out of the market.

The EU's March ruling went much further than Microsoft's 2002 settlement of similar charges with the

Justice Department, which required only that users be allowed to hide Media Player and set another player as the default.

Analysts predicted the financial impact on the company would not be huge. Microsoft has already counted the fine against its quarterly earnings, said Matt Rosoff, an analyst with Directions on Microsoft. He also said he didn't expect many consumers would want a PC without Media Player.

Rosoff said the biggest threat was that the ruling, compelling Microsoft to strip out parts of its operating system, would set a legal precedent for similar lawsuits.

Mark Ostrau, an analyst with Fenwick and West, said the ruling would hamper Microsoft's ability to bundle as much software into its operating systems as it would like.

"The real key to Microsoft's success is its ability to bundle. So not being able to bundle, or having that risk every time they want to bundle, that really does cramp their style," he said.

Bush plan puts forests in peril

BY MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Managers of the nation's 155 national forests will have more leeway to approve logging and other commercial projects with less formal environmental review under a new Bush administration plan, The Associated Press has learned.

The long-awaited plan will overhaul application of the landmark 1976 National Forest Management Act, which sets the basic rules for management of nation's 191 million acres of forests and grasslands and protects forest wildlife.

Forest Service officials scheduled a Wednesday conference call to announce the changes, which will be published in the Federal Register next week. The Associated Press obtained highlights of the plan, which goes into effect following publication.

The rules would leave intact some of the most contentious proposals from an earlier version released last year. Like that version, the final plan gives regional forest managers more discretion to approve logging, drilling

and mining operations without having to conduct formal scientific investigations known as environmental impact statements.

Such analyses, which outline the impact of a proposed activity on plant and animal life, can take years to complete. The new rules envision a more flexible approach that could be completed in months.

Forest Service officials say the new rules are designed to make forest planning more responsive to changing conditions by eliminating unnecessary paperwork and relying on assessments by local and regional managers.

"We really have a process that takes way too long — that really isn't as responsive to the system as it should be," said Sally Collins, associate chief of the Forest Service.

Collins said the new approach could cut costs by as much as 30 percent.

Environmentalists had not seen the new rules Wednesday, but said an earlier version catered to the timber and paper industries and weakened standards for protecting endangered or threatened species.



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Immigration initiative blocked by AZ judge

BY ANANDA SHOREY
Associated Press Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. — A voter-approved initiative designed to deny some public benefits to illegal immigrants will become Arizona law after a federal judge on Wednesday lifted a temporary restraining order.

Opponents of the law said they would appeal the decision. Backers of Proposition 200 praised the outcome.

“We just hoped against all hopes that justice would be served and it was,” said Kathy McKee, a key supporter of the measure.

U.S. District Judge David C. Bury on Nov. 30 temporarily barred the state from implementing Proposition 200 in response to a lawsuit by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

The group argued the law was unconstitutional. Bury issued a temporary restraining

order so he would have more time to consider the issue. The order ended Wednesday.

Proposition 200 requires proof of immigration status when obtaining certain government services and proof of citizenship when registering to vote. Government workers who don’t report illegal immigrants seeking benefits could face jail time and a fine.

Backers sold the measure during the campaign as a way to begin cracking down on illegal immigration in Arizona, the busiest illegal entry point on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Gov. Janet Napolitano, who opposed the measure, signed a proclamation putting the initiative into effect but prohibited implementation of its provisions on public services until Bury made a decision.

Prior to the Wednesday ruling, Napolitano said the state was prepared to implement the law.

In a statement read by a spokeswoman,

Attorney General Terry Goddard said: “The court has made its decision and now the state can move forward and implement the will of voters.”

MALDEF’s lawsuit argued that Proposition 200 is unconstitutional because it usurps the federal government’s power over immigration and naturalization.

The group contends the law will harm families who depend on public benefits for basic necessities and could potentially cut them from all state services.

The measure wasn’t intended to affect federally mandated services.

Goddard previously concluded that Proposition 200 applies only to non-mandated welfare benefits.

Supporters of the measure, however, filed a lawsuit Nov. 18 seeking to broaden its scope to include benefits such as public housing, food assistance, college education and employment benefits.

Bush’s showing among Hispanic men key to gains

BY WILL LESTER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush made increasing his support among Hispanic voters a leading goal in 2004 and he apparently achieved that aim largely because of gains among Hispanic men, a tracking poll suggests.

Hispanics are the nation's fastest growing minority group, though they made up only 8 percent of the overall vote nationally. They are a key voter group in swing states like Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Florida and Nevada.

Democrat John Kerry hoped to win enough support from Hispanics to win in a couple of those states, but Bush swept all five.

The National Annenberg Election Survey found Bush's overall support among Hispanics

was 35 percent in 2000, but grew to 41 percent in 2004. Exit polls of voters indicated a similar shift.

Bush's stronger performance with Hispanics helped him fend off Kerry in several states, but especially in New Mexico where Bush narrowly won this time. Democrat Al Gore won New Mexico in 2000.

Exit polls indicate Bush's support among Hispanics in New Mexico was 44 percent, higher than the 32 percent he got against Gore four years ago. About a third of New Mexico voters were Hispanic.

The Annenberg study found Bush's support among Hispanic men nationally grew from 34 percent in 2000 to 46 percent this year.

Annenberg examined the presidential preference of Hispanic voters in the eight weeks before the election and the two weeks after —

in both 2000 and 2004.

Hispanic women supported Bush at about the same levels — about 35 percent — in both 2000 and 2004, Annenberg found.

Bush got a majority of the support among Hispanics in the South — 55 percent — compared with 41 percent in 2000, according to the Annenberg report. In the Northeast, Bush improved from 20 percent support in 2000 to 35 percent support in 2004, the polling found.

The president got more support among Hispanics who asked to be interviewed in English than those who wanted to be interviewed in Spanish, Annenberg found.

The Annenberg survey was based on interviews with 703 Hispanic registered voters in 2000 and 906 in 2004. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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NATIONAL

Study: Global warming may be taking toll on rodents in West

By SCOTT SONNER
Associated Press Writer

RENO, Nev. — Populations of the American pika — a hamster-like rodent unable to survive in warm climates — continue to decline in the West, apparently due in part to global warming, a new study says.

Local populations of pikas have gone extinct at more than one-third of 25 sites surveyed since the mid-1990s in the Great Basin region between the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains, according to the study conducted by a researcher for the U.S. Geological Survey and funded by the World Wildlife Fund.

“Population by population, we’re witnessing some of the first contemporary examples of global warming apparently contributing to the local extinction of an American mammal at sites across an entire eco-region,” said Erik Beever, a USGS ecologist.

Pikas, a relative of the rabbit with small, round ears, are known for their high-pitched whistle often heard when humans approach. They gather wild flowers for food and make their homes among broken rocks at high elevations of mountain ranges in the western United States and southwest Canada.

Beever published a study in the Journal of Mammalogy in February 2003 that found populations of pikas had disappeared at seven of the 25 sites where he had documented them in the mid- to late-1990s in California, Oregon and Nevada.

Results of a follow-up field study this summer showed extinctions at two more of seven resurveyed sites for a total of nine sites where they no longer exist, or 36 percent, Beever said. He said he intends to publish details of those findings after he completes another round of surveys next summer.

“There are several contributing factors, but climate seems to be a very strong factor,” Beever told The Associated Press.

“At the places where they have been lost, the sites were hotter and drier than sites where they have remained,” he said in a telephone interview.

Previous research suggests American pikas are vulnerable to global warming because they live in areas with cool, relatively moist climates, Beever said. They’ve been shown to be unable to survive just six hours in temperatures as cool as 77 degrees, he said.

Beever, who did his graduate work at the University of Nevada, Reno, now works out of the USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center in Corvallis, Ore. His previous research suggested climate change may be interacting with other factors, such as increased road building and smaller habitat areas, to increase extinction risks.

Brooks Yeager, vice president in charge of global threats at the World Wildlife Fund in Washington D.C., said the new data shows the importance of efforts to combatting global warming by reducing heat-trapping emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.

“Extinction of a species, even on a local scale, is a red flag that cannot be ignored,” Yeager said.

“With clean energy solutions readily at hand, our leaders are responsible for either protecting or failing to protect our rich natural heritage from global warming.”

Critics say they don’t believe humans have anything to do with the gradual warming of the Earth.

“The whole idea that global warming causes extinctions is really quite nonsensical,” said Robert Ferguson, executive director of the Washington-D.C.-based Center for Science & Public Policy, affiliated with Frontiers of Freedom, a think tank created by former Sen. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo.

“Species go extinct for an awful lot of reasons. We’ve

had periods in the past where temperatures were higher than they are today,” Ferguson said.

“The ‘Dust Bowl’ in the American West and Southwest exceeded things we have today for a very very long time. So if warming affects them, these (pikas) should all be extinct already,” he said.

Beever said most alpine animals are expected to adapt to rising temperatures by seeking higher elevations or migrating farther north.

But the pikas live essentially on high-elevation “islands” and face great risks when attempting to migrate across lower elevation valleys. One-half mile is a long distance for a pika to travel in a lifetime, he said.

The loss of local populations of pikas is especially troubling because most local extinctions of animals are driven by loss of habitat, Beever said.

“We’ve had no change in habitat and yet we are seeing all these losses of pikas,” he said.

He said he’s now documented five different mountain ranges across the Great Basin where historic populations have been lost at the lower elevations, but remain in the same ranges at higher elevations.

Those that have gone extinct the past decade, Beever said, include sites in southeast Oregon in the Steens and Warner mountain ranges, sites in northwest Nevada near Summit Lake south of the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge and in the Pine Forest mountain range south of Denio, and sites in central Nevada in the Desatoya range west of Austin.

Beever said he returns at least twice to confirm a population is missing at spots he documented them before. The pikas signal call makes their presence easier to determine than with many animals, he said.

“One of the nice things about pikas,” he said, “if they are there, you’ll know it.”

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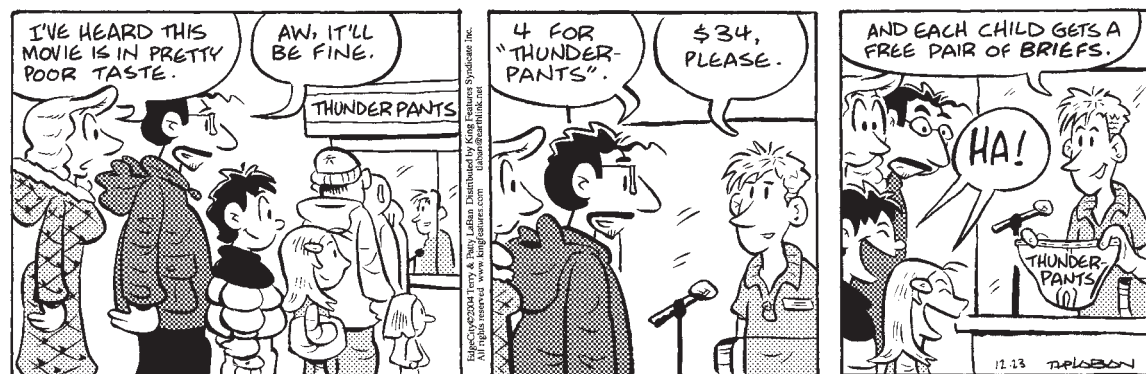
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The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



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A black and white cartoon by Whamond. Two men are standing at a bar. The man on the left is wearing a suit and a hat, and is holding a glass. The man on the right is wearing a plaid shirt and a hat, and is also holding a glass. They are both looking at a third man who is sitting at the bar. The third man is wearing a patterned shirt and glasses, and has a large nose. In the background, there are silhouettes of other people. The cartoon is signed 'WHAMOND' in the bottom left corner.

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