Church and its developer part ways in Pasadena

This article is reprinted by permission from The Pasadena Star-News of Oct. 17, 1993, where it ran under the headline "Church, Developer Part Ways; 'Contract Issues' Cited as Resolving Split.

By Perry Scott

The worldwide Church of God announced Oct. 17 that Shea Homes will no longer oversee plans to develop the former Ambassador College property, raising questions about whether the project will face delays or possibly suffer the fate of an earlier and unsuccessful development proposal.

Neither the church nor Shea Homes is commenting on why they parted ways, except to say the recent decision is a result of project manager Bob Yoder played a role in the decision. Mr. Yoder was a key player in developing the Ambassador plan.

"As a result of Shea Homes' decision to reassign its project manager and other contract issues, Shea Homes' involvement will not continue into this next phase," said church director of finance and planning Bernard Schnippert in a written statement.

Mr. Yoder could not be reached by phone Oct. 17. Calls to his office were referred to Ambassador president Les Thomas, who said he would not comment on the matter.

Dr. Schnippert said he would not discuss what specific contract issues were in dispute but did say the plan for the 46-acre property will move forward without delay.

"We own all the land and all the buildings and all the contracts in this process. There is no one else involved. We don't need to talk about the details," he said. "I expect we'll go forward, frankly, without any interruption."

The announcement comes just weeks before a study of the plan's environmental impact was set to be released. The church wants to build a 1,000-unit project on the site, which would be one of the largest single developments in Pasadena's history.

"This is not a positive development," said councilman Steve Madison, who represents the area where the property is located. "This is a mammoth proposal, and it is going to demand the best minds available to ensure the project is shepherded through appropriately."

It is the second time a developer has prepared a plan for the Ambassador campus only to be dropped from the project. Last year Legacy Partners of Irvine, Calif., abandoned plans to buy the property from the church after three years of negotiation fell apart.

Dr. Schnippert said the church's relationship with Shea Homes was wholly different from its connection with Legacy. Not only was Shea Homes not negotiating to buy the property, Dr. Schnippert said, but the church is the applicant for the plan as it goes to the city for review.

"Still, the split has left some in the community concerned about the project's ultimate fate," he said. "It is such a large project and such an important project that it should go to the city for review."

Church of God member survives chronic cardiomyopathy with a heart transplant

By Dixon Cartwright

IG SANDY, Texas—Mike Smith had a change of heart about several things four years ago when doctors fitted him with a new one. Now he says he values life more, and, almost paradoxically, he's less afraid of death.

The 45-year-old Church of God member from Mounds, Okla., was here with family members to attend Sabbath services with the Church of God Big Sandy recently and talked about his surgery in 2000 in a Tulsa, Okla., hospital that outfitted him with a new lease on life.

Mr. Smith, husband of Derinda and father of Kyle, 18, Brenna, 14, and Mariah, 9, had known for years that he had little chance of making it to his 50th birthday without a transplant. He had suffered for eight years with cardiomyopathy, a congenital problem he shared with a brother, Roger, who died of the disease in 1987 at age 33.

People with cardiomyopathy, progressive deterioration of the heart muscle, die early—unless they get a new heart.

The countdown to Mr. Smith's transplant began Aug. 7, 1999, a Saturday morning. He woke up in his bedroom at the Smith residence in Tulsa and noticed that one of his legs was numb.

"I started poking it with a letter opener," he said. "A visit to a hospital revealed he had a blood clot in his left leg, a result of the cardiomyopathy."

A week after surgery to remove the clot, "my heart began to fail," Mr. Smith told The Journal. "My wife, Derinda, called law-rence Gregorie and Steve Andrews [of the Tulsa Church of God] to appoint me after the surgery."

It was an emotional time for Mr. Smith's doctors told Mrs. Smith her husband had maybe a week to live; there was a shortage of donor hearts.

"I was feeling down. Of course, he later started it up by my good friend Ellis Stewart."

The Journal invites reports on Feast 2003

B EING, Ore.—Visiting Bend, utilizing the Internet, was an interesting way to attend the Feast (sponsored by the United Church of God). Seeing how my duties kept me grounded here at the compound, I saw the Feast in a different light this year.

The opening session was a real delight: God and man standing side by side came to mind. Oh, what a wonderful world it will be! The Kingdom of God is certainly going to be a reality in a few more years. No skeptic here!

Because not everyone observed the same calendar to determine the dates of the Feast, please include the beginning date of your observance and specify whether it is the first full day (such as Oct. 11) or the evening before the first full day (such as Oct. 10).

Please include the name of the church or fellowship affiliation, if any, or other sponsor of the site.

Limit the write-up to 300 words; all reports may be edited for length.

The Journal hopes you had a great Feast of Tabernacles 2003.

Readers' Feast of Tabernacles reports begin

Following are the first reports Feastgoers sent to The Journal concerning the Feast of Tabernacles sites this year, with many observances having begun the evening of Friday, Oct. 10, and continued through Saturday, Oct. 18.

The Journal invites Feastgoers to send in short reports on the brethren and their activities at this year's Feast.

Mail information to Festival Reports, The Journal, PO Box 1010, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A. Or E-mail the information to info@thejournal.org. Or you may fax it to (903) 636-8097.

Photographs as prints or E-mail attachments are also welcomed.

Best cyber-Feast ever

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The Journal hopes you had a great Feast of Tabernacles 2003.
HAWKINS, Texas—The Church of God Big Sandy area took Mr. Floyd Lochner to Thailand for six months to teach classes at the new school operated by Gilead Institute. The institute, founded by Leon and Gloria Sexton, who have residences in Thailand and Rowlett, Texas, began the Legacy Institute Leadership Training Center in Chiang Mai, Thailand on May 31, 2002.

The school is designed to train young men and women to help evangelize for “the work of God in Asia,” said Dave Havir, pastor of the Big Sandy congregation.

“The congregation has long been interested in the work of Leon and Gloria Sexton. Leon is the chairman of the Big Sandy congregation,” Mr. Havir told The Journal.

Mr. Havir explained how the board decided to help provide a teacher for the school. At a board meeting, Bernie Montesalvo (a board member from Gladeewater, Texas) proposed an idea about our congregation sponsoring a worker to help at the Legacy Institute, he said. “The board liked the idea, and the congregational budget committee set aside funds for this worthwhile project.”

Mr. Havir told The Journal why he recommended Miss Hufton for the project.

“Miss Hufton has done a great job,” Mr. Havir said. “When Amie told me that she was considering doing some missionary work in South Africa, I asked her if she would consider doing some missionary work in Thailand instead.”

“She immediately expressed an interest in doing a commitment to me after she researched the details of Legacy Institute.”

Miss Hufton paid for transportation and visa costs. Though Legacy Institute provided Miss Hufton’s housing and food, the congregations agreed to pay her a monthly stipend.

Miss Hufton graduated from Texas A&M University at Galveston last December and has an interest in marine biology.


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Notes and quotes

Lee Sefcak dies

LONGVIEW, Texas—Lee Sefcak, 93, died Oct. 10. Mr. Sefcak, an early mem- ber of the Big Sandy Church of God, in a cemetery

Avoid human interpretation

CONROE, Texas—Church of God veteran Art Mokarow of the Worldwide Church of God head- quarters in Pasadena, Calif., worked for many years for the church’s printing department and was a local elder.

Survivors include a daughter, Joyce Catherine of Big Sandy, a son, Gary Sefcak of Big Sandy, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Lee Sefcak

COG U.K. pastor recovering

LINCOLN, England—James McBride, pastor of the Church of God United Kingdom and the Churches of God Outreach Ministries representative in Britain, is recovering after open- heart surgery Oct. 9 to repair a heart valve. Mr. McBride went home Oct. 17.

His major was marine biology. Legacy's representative in Thailand is starting up a live phone con- nection for Sabbath services.

To get in on the weekly discussion every Saturday at 8 a.m. Pacific time, send 222-7001. Waiting for the recording, then enter 6444.

For more information call Mr. Neat at (775) 882-3510.

Friends of the Sabbath Australia

SYDNEY, Australia—Craig White has resurrected his Friends of the Sabbath Australia Web site. Find it at www. friendsofsabbath.org.

Darin’s Hot Michigan

GOBLES, Mich.—Church of God Big Sandy (Texas) pastor Dave McDonald of Gobles will be a triad at a Michigan “Hunt” for a group to speak at a Sabbath service on Nov. 22, announces Art Mokarow.

For detailed information contact Ms. Healy at healy@iaa. com or (269) 628-5118.

She asks that E-mailers include the word “Hunt” in the subject line because “I do not read mail that is not marked to me.”

Fellowship weekend

BIG SANDY, Texas—The Church of God Big Sandy plans its annual Family Fellowship Weekend to run Friday, Dec. 26, through Sunday, Dec. 28. The workshop will feature a variety show, family dance, four meals and several activities.

Preceding the weekend will be two other activities. Monday

To rush through Thursday the congrega- tion will host a Bands Camp for young ladies. Wednesday through Friday will be a young men’s camp-out and hiking.

For more information see www.big-sandy.org.

Longtime COG member Floyd Lochner dies

OXFORD, Wis.—Longtime COG member Floyd Lochner, 91, died Oct. 23 at his residence in Oxford. Floyd Otto Lochner was a former superintendent of Imperial, the primary and secondary schools operated by the Worldwide Church of God in Pasadena, Calif.

He served as a member of the WCG and Global Church of God, Dr. Lochner was born in Chandler, Okla., on Sept. 12, 1912.

He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Oklahoma and his doctorate in education in 1969 from Ambassador College.

He served in the U.S. Navy and was a world-class runner.

He won a national intercollegiate one-mile track championship while a college student in 1932 and a national intercollegiate two-mile championship in 1937. He held the U.S. and world records in the two-mile steeplechase in 1936 and 1937.

He was director of the Works Project Administration, WPA, for the State of Oklahoma from 1939 to 1942 and a trainer of military recruits from 1942 to 1946.


He is survived by his wife of 26 years, Kimberly, a son, Floyd Otto Jr. of Lexington, S.C., an elder in the church; a daughter, Peggy Harris of Fort Collins, Colo.; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Survivors include a daughter, Floyd Otto of the United Church of Christ in Edina, Minn., with son Otto of the United Church of God and son-in-law David Harris, the Eternal Church of God officiating.

For more church-related infor- mation see www.eternalog.org.

Carmen and Elsie Burnett

San Diego, Calif.—The news titled “Global Ad Campaign” in “Notes and Quotes” in the Journal of Sept. 30, mentioned an incorrect name for a member of the Church of the Eternal God. “Wray Zehnring, not Warren Zehnring, was making the announcement that the CEGs’ U.K. affiliate, the Church of God, had received 1,200 responses to a recent ad campaign to distribute the booklets God’s Commanded Holy Days and Don’t Keep Christmas.

To the Journal

Oct. 31, 2003

Please rush!