Music of Titanic era rendered

By Shelley Mika

Staff writer

Ever wondered what the passengers of the Titanic heard just before the tragic sinking of the ship?

Now the experience is possible but safely on land.

This weekend, Abendmusik will perform "Tribute to the Titanic" at First-Plymouth Church.

In 1912, the Titanic - the flagship of the White Star Line - hit an iceberg and began its two-and-a-half hour descent into icy waters. As it did, a group of musicians known as the Titanic Orchestra performed music of

Abendmusik will recreate and pay tribute to the musicians of the time. Guest conductor Jack Bethards will lead a 12-piece salon orchestra in selections from the White Star Song

Compositions from Victor Herbert, Fritz Kreisler, Paul Lincke, Ethelbert Nevin, Edward Elgar and Irving Berlin will be played. Melodies in the form of waltzes, selections from operettas, rags, march two-steps and lighter character pieces should all be recognizable.

Bethards is president and CEO of the Schoenstein Organ Company in San Francisco, Calif. The company recently designed and built the newly installed Lied Organ at First Plymouth



Church where the performance will be

The majority of the orchestra are members of the Omaha Symphony

"Tribute to the Titanic" will begin 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$17 for senior citizens 62 and older and \$10 for students. To make reservations call Abendmusik at (402) 476-9933.

First Lady visits Letterman

NEW YORK (AP) - After weeks York. of needling Hillary Rodham Clinton for being a carpetbagger who was scared to appear on his show, David Letterman stifled the sarcasm when the first lady finally appeared.

"We have to give this woman a tremendous amount of credit for just showing up," Letterman told his audience on Wednesday.

Clinton even proved to hold her own when the TV host asked about the first lady's new home.

"Every idiot in the universe is going to drive by honking now,' Letterman said.

'Was that you?" Clinton asked. Letterman has made a running gag of Clinton, calling her an outsider from Arkansas seeking political opportunity in a Senate bid from New

Clinton admitted to being "just a little" nervous.."

Letterman started by lobbing her a softball, asking her to "tell us a little bit about yourself."

Clinton smiled and told Letterman she grew up in the Midwest - as he did - has a mother named Dorothy - as he does - and just couldn't resist the temptation to follow him to New

Letterman asked Clinton what she thought of the mayor.

"He's done a lot of stuff as mayor, but I think being senator is a different kind of job. A senator can't go arrest a homeless person," she said, referring to the mayor's recent crackdown on the homeless who refuse police orders to

Government gives financial incentive to networks for anti-drug TV themes

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) – The at \$22 million. federal government used financial "I'm fairly incentives to get television networks to work anti-drug messages into the scripts of some popular TV shows. The White House drug office even got the opportunity to review scripts before the

The arrangement, first disclosed Wednesday by the online news service Salon.com, raised questions about the independence of networks and their willingness to let others influence what goes on the air.

Among the shows reviewed by the government were NBC's top-rated "ER," CBS's "Chicago Hope" and "Cosby," ABC's "The Drew Carey Show" and "The Practice" and Fox's "Beverly Hills 90210," according to

The complicated arrangement stemmed from Congress' 1997 approval of a program to buy anti-drug ads on TV. Networks were asked to match each commercial spot bought by the government with a free one. Since the program started, however, commercial time has become more valuable with the rising demand for ads by

Internet companies. The government has since agreed to give up some of its ad time - as long as the networks demonstrate that some of their programs convey anti-drug messages, said Rich Hamilton, CEO of Zenith Media, the ad-buying firm that helped develop the idea as a go-between for the networks and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

This freed up advertising time that the networks could sell to other clients at steeper prices, Hamilton said. The White House drug office valued the programming messages it had approved

"I'm fairly amazed that there has been any concern expressed about this," Hamilton said. "It has been so above board and clearly voluntary on the part of everyone involved."

Yet an expert on media ethics said it raises questions about the motives of the entertainment industry.

"What it can do for the networks is make it seem that they are only going to run those messages or shows that have prior government approval," said Aly Colon, a professor at the Poynter

"That may not be reality, but at least it can become a perception."

Networks submitted scripts or tapes of completed shows for the government drug office's review, said Alan Levitt, director of the national youth media campaign at the White House drug office. At no time did the office suggest changes or rewrite the scripts, he said.

"All we said was, if you believe that a certain program that you intend to broadcast delivers our message - essentially that drugs can kill you - submit it to us for an evaluation, and we may decide that we can credit you for a pro bono match," Hamilton said.

Salon.com, quoting an unidentified source, said that in an episode of the WB's "Smart Guy" series, two substance-abusing teen-agers were originally depicted as being popular, but the script was changed after government review to show them as "losers" hidden away in a utility room taking drugs.

In at least 24 instances over the past few years, networks or producers have come to the federal drug office for advice in how to portray substance abuse situations, Levitt said. This was independent of the program offering can't buy networks that cheap."

financial credit, he said.

For example, producers and writers of "ER" have frequently contacted the office. One recent story line about a youth coming into the emergency room after having abused alcohol was likely included after the office told producers that alcohol is the most frequently abused drug among young people, said Donald Vereen, deputy director of the hite House drug policy office.

We plead guilty to using every lawful means to saving the lives of children," said another member of the drug office, Bob Weiner.

NBC has given scripts or completed shows to the drug office to review, but has not accepted any financial credits for anti-drug messages, a network representative said.

NBC never ceded content control of any of our programs to the ONDCP or any other department of the government," said Rosalyn Weinman, executive vice president of broadcast content policy. "At no time did NBC turn over scripts for approval by the ONDCP."

ABC spokeswoman Julie Hoover said the network submitted scripts to the drug office, but received no financial credit because it had already used enough free commercials. ABC does not plan to seek credit in the future,

Asked why ABC had submitted scripts, Hoover said: "Why not? We don't hate the ONDCP. We approve of what they're doing."

Said Steve Dnistrian, executive vice president of the Partnership For a Drug-Free America, which has created antidrug commercials: "The government is not rejecting scripts or controlling creative direction here. That's absurd. You

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