

Abandoned baby fights for life

Search goes on for person who buried newborn

By Jack Chang
STAFF WRITER

ALTADENA — A newborn baby found covered in dirt and grass beside a foothills jogging trail was in critical condition but improving, doctors at Huntington Memorial Hospital said Sunday.

The infant boy, with his umbilical cord still attached, was discovered by a jogger shortly after 8 p.m. Saturday at Alpine Villa Drive and Lake Avenue. The baby was suffering from severe hypothermia and a body temperature of as low as 80 degrees, hospital officials said at a

news conference.

"In my 25 years, I have not seen a baby brought to the hospital who was partially buried like this," said Dr. Ricardo Liberman, director of the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

"It's very sad to see someone come to this point of desperation where they have to do this thing to their baby," he said.

The infant, dubbed "Baby Christian" by hospital staff, was described as African American and weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces.

Los Angeles County sheriff's Detective Kevin Elliott said authorities were looking Sunday for who-

ever buried the baby.

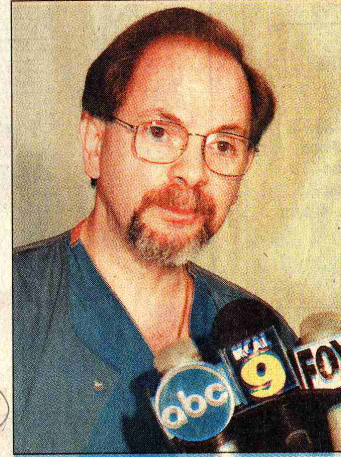
Officials used bloodhounds and picked up a trail they followed for about a mile. Authorities planned to resume their investigation today.

Detectives believe someone walked with the baby to the hillside site, which is owned by the municipal Las Flores Water Co., Elliott said.

Sheriff's investigators intend to seek attempted murder charges against the person who buried the baby, he added.

"It was a good thing that lady found it or it'd be a dead baby up

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A NEWBORN found half-buried on an Altadena jogging trail is described as in "critical but improving condition" by Dr. Ricardo Liberman, left. The baby boy, who almost died of hypothermia, is in intensive care at Huntington Memorial Hospital.

Photo by JAMES KU