

# The Rose

By Eddie Diamond, Jr.

The "rose" is a four-inch glass tube with a rose inside and sold with a copper scrub pad. This tube, sold across the counter in convenience stores and gas stations in Jacksonville, is a crack pipe. Reputable stores will not sell this item.

What kind of message are we sending to our children when we say, "Just say no to drugs," and then let people sell crack pipes across the counters? This is the height of hypocrisy. These stores are near schools. One store I went into across the street from Andrew Jackson High School sold this drug paraphernalia.

We ask why are so many young people on crack and other drugs. They say this rose is legal, but it is a weapon of mass destruction. It is one reason we see so many crimes, because people are driven to desperate measures to support their addictions.

All of us should take a good look at this glass tube with a rose inside. It's sold everywhere, every side of town - north, south, east, and west. Every time this pipe is sold, someone will use it to smoke crack, not just once but over and over

again. These stores make it convenient to smoke crack; they also make it convenient to introduce a young girl or boy to crack. Go to some of these stores for yourself and buy a rose, then ask for a scrub pad and they will both be behind the counter together.

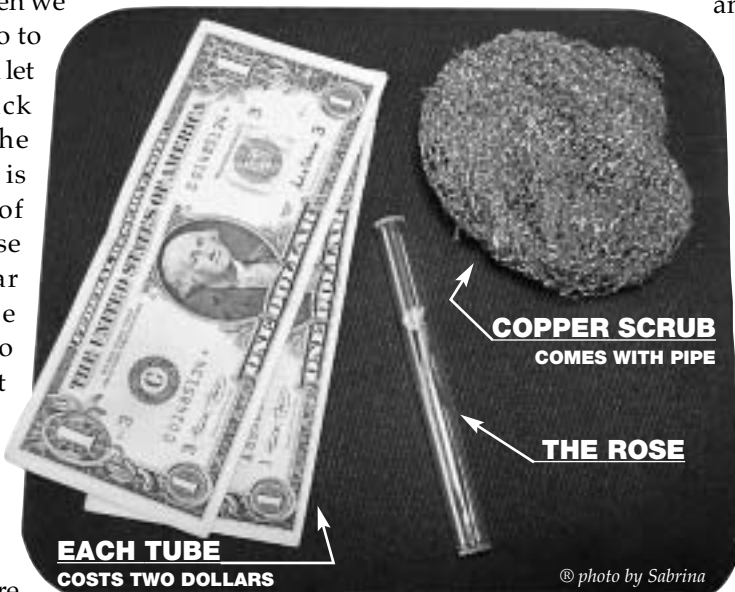
Do the math. Every tube costs \$2, every 10 feet of pipe will be \$60, every 100 feet will be \$600, and every 1,000 feet will be \$6,000. That money will add up. It's as if the stores are taxing the crack sold on the street, and they are getting a free ride.

If the drug user is caught with these items, he or she will be charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. People in most neighborhoods

will tell you, and the average person on the street knows, the rose is a crack pipe.

So, my question is: how long will we let this go on before another child is hooked on crack or another homicide occurs? Put a stop to the sale of this four-inch pipe called the rose. If there is ever a time to stand up, it's now.

— Eddie Diamond is a community activist fighting crime in our neighborhoods.



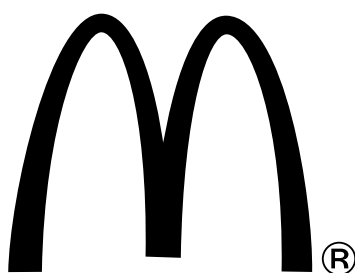
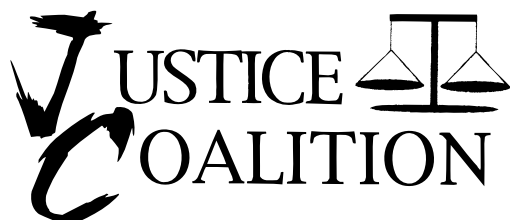
These items were purchased at an Amoco Station on the Westside.

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