

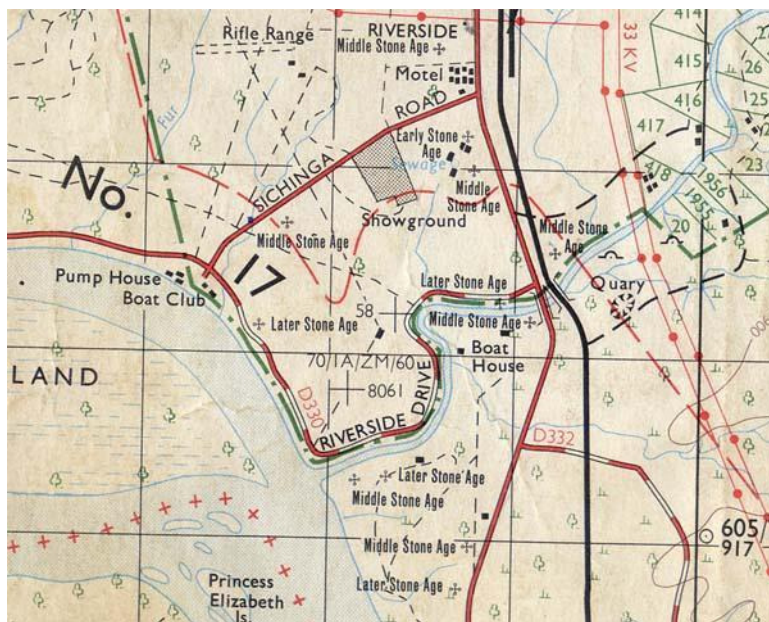


Dear All

My header is the road from the Waterfront entrance to Sichango Road (The Royal Mile). This road is a potholed nightmare and with the rains and a broken water pipe, it won't be long before it is impassable. The road is raised onto a causeway because either side is a bit boggy, so it is not an easy road to maintain. It would appear, though, that no-one wants to take responsibility for the road maintenance. Does it belong to Roads Department, Livingstone City Council or to Zambia Wildlife Authority? No-one will say.

For many, many years Safari Par Excellence, the owners of The Waterfront, have been doing their best by dumping laterite on the road to fill in holes; no authority has taken any interest. Even when Sichango Road was being repaired the pleas to have this stretch of 130 metres repaired were not listened to.

The map (1974 version) shows the original location of Riverside Drive which ran all along the river from the top of the Game Park, past the Pump House (Water Intake) and the Boat Club and then continued along the river to the Maramba mouth and then wound its way along the Maramba River to the Falls Road. The Waterfront is not marked, of course, but is 100 metres from the Boat Club; the David Livingstone Safari Lodge is next to the Waterfront. The road from the Waterfront along the Zambezi and the Maramba was a lovely drive but now has fallen into disuse because it has not been maintained. Surely this is a road which should be repaired for the UNWTO and for tourism in general in Livingstone.





## Fencing the Mosi-oa-Tunya Park

I was told that ZAWA has been given the funding to fence the whole of the Mosi-oa-Tunya Park. I wrote a couple of weeks ago that I had seen some fencing going up by the airport. It is a much better constructed fence than the previous one, but it will still have an elephant problem. Now, I am told, the fence is being extended to cage in the whole of the park.



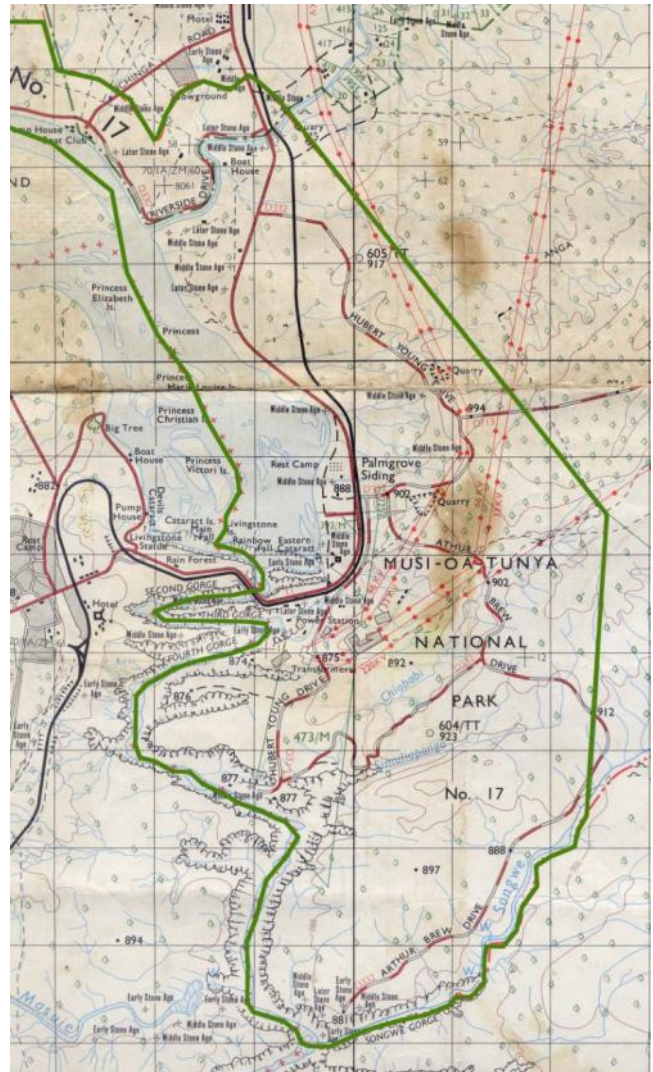
We reported before that ZAWA had cleared some land on Sichango Road on which to construct a new gate just south of Chrismar Hotel. Beyond this gate, apart from the 'National Park' are properties which have title deeds issued to them by Lands Department – The David Livingstone Safari Lodge, The Waterfront, African Queen, The Zambezi Boat Club, the Pump Station and some homes. One assumes that ZAWA cannot restrict access to these properties or charge park fees for entrance. The land, as far as I understand it must belong to the property owners and not ZAWA. And yet, the gate, one assumes will have to be manned 24 hours a day.

Let's move further round. *Here is my old map again with some splodges – been well-used. I have drawn the boundary in green as shown on the map.*

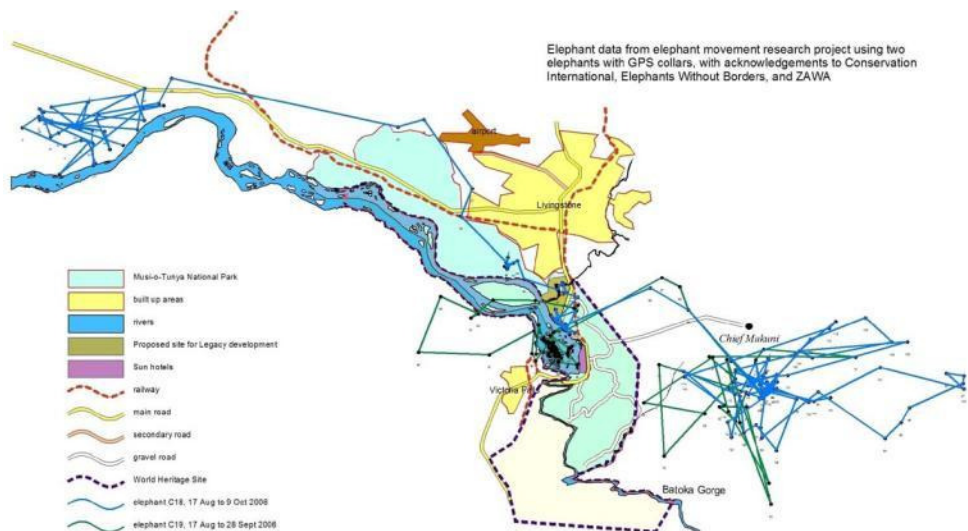
Assuming that the park boundaries remain the same, the following roads will have to pass through the fence:

Falls Road, Maramba Farms road (also to Baobab Ridge), Hubert Young Drive, Mukuni Road, Arthur Brew Drive (twice). Each will require its own gate – manned 24 hours a day? At what cost?

I think it is important that we know why we are fencing the park. Is it to keep the animals in or the people out? In this southern section there are few animals and those that use it most are the elephants.



Some years ago two elephants were collared and monitored. Below is a map of their wanderings. Their routes cross and re-cross the fence line.





## Rain and more rain ...

As I write this it is raining. It has been raining every day, mostly in the afternoon. Yesterday, though, it rained most of the day – a continuous dripping rain. When it stopped later I decided to go to have a look at the Maramba River. The Maramba did have water in it earlier this week but not too much. But when we arrived at Maramba River Lodge, the muddy water was belting down the river carrying with it lots of flotsam and jetsam from further upstream. There were branches, water hyacinth, plastic bottles and bags and the odd flipflop ...



Then, for an added treat a pair of hippos plunged into the water a bit downstream and then swam/paddled upstream in front of the lodge against the current.



In 2010 the Maramba River flooded. It reached the bottom of the bridge on the Falls Road and was a great spectacle. It wasn't much fun for Maramba River Lodge, though, as the river swept through the grounds

and made a complete mess. This can only happen, of course, if the tributaries fill and add to the local rains. The catchment for the Maramba starts near Senkobo which is 30 km north of Livingstone.



*Maramba River in 2010*

### Blocked Drains

I have complained about the blocked drains on Kombe Drive. With all the rain yesterday the road was almost covered with water. I really don't understand why the drain cannot be unblocked – it has been like this for years ...



## ZAMBIA

### ZAWA DG relieved of his Duties

In reports in the media this week we are informed that Sylvia Masebo, Minister of Tourism, has 'dropped' the Director General, Edwin Matokwani and four directors.

From the *Zambian Eye*:

*Five top officials at the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA), including director-general Edwin Matokwani, have been fired on allegations of corruption in the awarding of hunting safari concessions to some companies. And police had by press time sealed off ZAWA offices in Chilanga.*

*Minister of Tourism and Arts Sylvia Masebo said Government has also directed ZAWA to cancel and nullify the whole tender for the granting of safari hunting concessions. Ms Masebo said during a media briefing yesterday that the matter has been referred to relevant investigative wings of Government for further investigations and possible prosecution. Others relieved of their duties are conservation acting director Melody Zeko, commercial acting director Rose Chivumba, finance acting director Andrew Sampa and head of procurement Taulino Banda.*



*Ms Masebo said Government has appointed an interim management team for administrative purposes and that the appointment of the ZAWA board is also being expedited.*

However, in the Post:

*TOURISM minister Sylvia Masebo says Zambia's wild animals were being airlifted out of the country without the knowledge of the state.*

*Justifying the dismissal of Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) director Edwin Matokwani and four others, Masebo yesterday said she would ensure she takes the best action so that the country is protected from plunder.*

But, then again, from the *Zambian Watchdog*:

*The cancellation of hunting safari tenders and subsequent sacking of five top officials at the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) by Tourism minister Sylvia Masebo was done for her personal gains because the companies that she has interest were not successful in obtaining the licenses.*

So, when I got to this story I gave up. The story starts to get political and that is not my corner ...

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### **Ms Masebo visits Siavonga**

Ms Masebo did a tour of Siavonga before Christmas. She visited most of the lodges and listened to the private sector about improvements for Siavonga to make it a more attractive destination for tourism.

From Siavonga News:

*A presentation was given by the Secretary of the Association (Siavonga Tourism and Business Development Association) to enlighten the Minister about Siavonga, its tourism assets and the concerns of the business community. The presentation focussed on what Siavonga has but more importantly what Siavonga doesn't have.*

*The point was made that if we are to raise the profile of Siavonga and put it on the Tourism Map then we have to have more tourist attractions in the town which means more investment. Central and Local Government must create the enabling environment to attract more investment not just for tourism in hotels and activities, but also for general commerce and business in order to provide for the facilities the tourism industry needs.*

*The concerns of the industry were also presented to the Minister such as poor roads, lack of local government services, licensing and the cost of doing business in the tourism industry, lack of control in the building of unplanned and informal structures, the promotion of Siavonga as a tourist destination, the Siavonga Airstrip, Kapenta rigs, illegal fishing practices, lack of tourism focussed development planning, lack of shopping facilities, lack of investment incentives, lack of wildlife reserves and the general lack of permanent tourist attractions. ...*

*The Minister assured the business community that Siavonga had been included in the 2013 roads budget and said that the Ministry of Tourism would take on the issue of the airstrip and facilitate a resolution to the problems as soon as possible. ..*

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### **Proposed Dam Wall Viewing Area**

From Siavonga News

The Siavonga Business Association has proposed a new Dam Wall viewing area to be opened on the Zambian side in order to promote tourism in the district. Siavonga lacks tourist attractions and apart from the usual sunset cruise on the Lake and a visit to the Dam Wall there are few places for tourists to visit. ...

With the permission of the Immigration Authorities and the support of the District Commissioner, the Association made a visit to the area to determine the viability of the project. The road to the old quarry (used for building the Dam Wall in the 1950's) was still in existence and was accessible by vehicle.

However, the remaining route was only accessible on foot through what appeared to consist of hills, valleys and fairly thick bush. By searching the area on foot, a route was found following bush footpaths across the ridges of the hills and onwards towards the target area. As the team got closer, a tantalising view of what was to come appeared - but we still had not reached the required destination ...

Persevering, a route was found to an adjacent hill top which could be accessible by cutting a 2km stretch of new road through the bush. It is envisaged that a vehicle parking area would be constructed on this hill top with the possibility of making a picnic area and small shop to serve refreshments. The remaining distance of about 200 metres to the viewing area would be made on foot and a safe footpath could be made.

The view of the Dam Wall from this vantage point was spectacular. Turning around "on the spot" gave another fantastic view of the Kariba Gorge and the Zambezi River.

*Now, all they need is some funding ...*

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### **From BirdWatch Zambia**

#### **STATUS OF PRESSURES ON MACHILE IBA by Chaona Phiri**

Popularly known for hosting about two thirds of the semi-endemic Black-cheeked Lovebird, Machile IBA is an area dominated by Mopane woodland, with some grassland, floodplain, thicket, Savanna woodland and remnant Mutemwa.

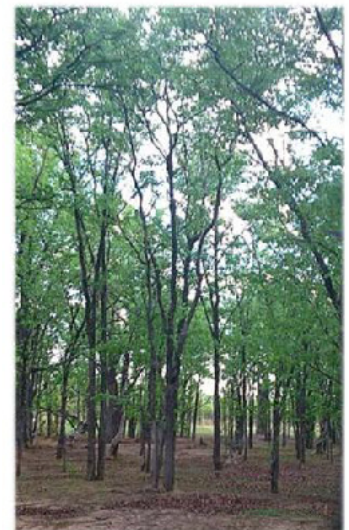
*Black-cheeked Lovebird photo by Chinga Lufwino*



The site is very rich in woodland birds and some water birds due to the presence of the Machile River. During the last week of October, a team of BWZ staff and three research student interns from the University of Zambia spent a week in the IBA and came up with a list of 164 species out of 302 species by Pete Leonard's 2010 checklist. Of the 164, about 34 species were water birds whilst the rest were woodland species.

*Mopane woodlands photo by  
Chaona Phiri*

I have been to several IBAs during the course of the year but have not seen so many Hamerkops in the same place, with slightly over 100 being recorded from only three sites within the IBA. In addition to that, this IBA also seems to be housing a lot of breeding Redbilled Buffalo Weavers whose conspicuous large communal nests are extremely abundant all over the IBA. Other special sightings included about 2,750 Black-Cheeked Lovebirds, White-browed Sparrow weavers, Blackcheeked Waxbills, Violet-backed Starlings, Lesser Grey Shrike, the White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, four different species of Woodpeckers, and five different species of Cuckoos and several Red-billed Oxpeckers, seemingly preferring to pitch on Donkeys rather than cattle.



*Bearded Woodpeckers  
photo by Kabuku Likando*



Unfortunately, all these unique and interesting species are at great risk of losing their habitat as tree cutting especially for Charcoal burning within the IBA has escalated resulting in a lot of land being cleared. What is most painful is that people in the area don't seem to know the value of the Mopane woodland as charcoal is sold at very low prices. It was shocking to hear a trader saying a 25kg bag is ZMK 4000 and he was willing to even drop it to 3000. This further shows the degree of poverty or unsustainable livelihood strategies in the area. Considering the amount of work involved in charcoal production, it's actually heartbreaking to know that people will do so much for so little, just to stay alive.....

*A cleared area within the IBA and Charcoal, packaged and ready for sale, photos by Ignitius Ziba*



### More about Machile (Machili) IBA

Machile IBA from Birdlife International:

*Site description: An area dominated by mopane woodland, with some grassland, flood-plain, thicket, mutemwa forest and munga. It covers sections of the mid-Machile, Simatanga, Sichifulo and Sala rivers, though there are very few permanent sources of surface water. The area is bisected by the Livingstone–Mulobezi railway line and there are small villages scattered throughout.*

This area is largely floodplain in the rainy season and the dirt road shown to Machile IBA is impassable when it is wet. The IBA, though, has huge possibilities for tourism if the environment is protected. Sichifula (Sichifulo) GMA is very beautiful and, driving through that GMA is an alternative way to reach Kafue National Park. I have driven the route and it is much nicer than driving along the main road via Kalomo.



We have heard that government has taken back the management of the Mulobezi Railway, so, were the railway to be rehabilitated, the area could be developed for steam tours. The Mulobezi line could take not only trains, but cars too ... ! Just joking ...





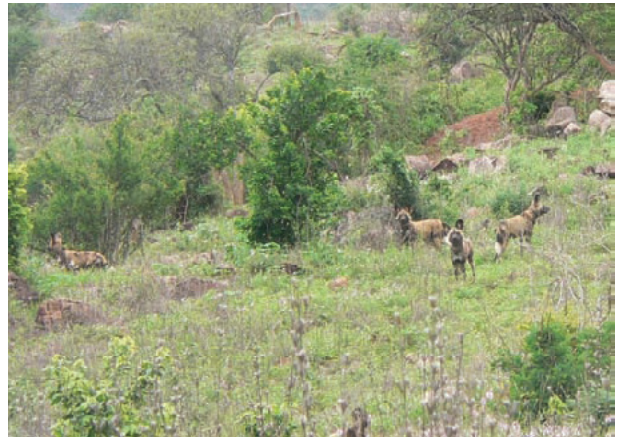
## From Painted Dog Foundation

### Painted Dog's move from Zimbabwe to Mozambique.

Cochise was born into the Vundu pack of Mana Pools in June 2011. He was one of a litter of nine. At the time he didn't particularly stand out from the rest of the pack, but today we have evidence of his extraordinary capabilities. On September 30th he was close to the Zambezi River on the Eastern edge of Mana Pools in Zimbabwe. On November 26th he had travelled more than 150 km and is now in the Tchuma Tchato area of North West Mozambique and who knows how much further he will go! Cochise is young to be doing this at only 18 months old; we would normally expect to see such long distance dispersal from dogs of three years old. He is not alone though. Sightings of the Vundu pack have confirmed that another five dogs are "missing" and at this stage we are assuming they are with Cochise. The Vundu pack is still 20+ strong, so perhaps it was pressure for space and availability of food that motivated these six to move on. We will learn more as the story unfolds and we can identify whom he is with. ...

### Late denning in Gonarezhou

As many of you know, we collaborated with Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and translocated seven dogs into Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) at the beginning of the year. The two females, Gaia and Aurora, did not fare so well and after Gaia was killed we recaptured Aurora. The remaining five members of the Ukusutha pack stayed in GNP and Dr. Rosemary Groom of the Lowveld Wild Dog Project has kept us up to date on their progress. The female, Chipso, soon disappeared and Rosemary recently discovered her carcass. The cause of death could not be determined, although the carcass was found near a poacher's camp so we cannot say for sure that it was a natural event. Alpha female Bekezela, alpha male Dutchie and his brothers Nyeza and Nhlanhla, stayed in the area and had pups. Only two pups were seen but recent reports suggest that they are dead. However, we believe Bekezela has had more pups who are now estimated to be three or four weeks old. It is unusual for the dogs to have two litters in one year, so we will remain eager for information on their progress as the weeks go by.



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## Zim Road Blocks

Responding to questions from stakeholders in Bulawayo, the national Deputy Officer Commanding Traffic, Assistant Commissioner Kenny Mthombeni, said officers bent on corruption set up illegal roadblocks. "When you see two officers at check points or a police officer trying to enforce traffic regulations in a private vehicle, disobey their instructions and report them to their commanding officer," said Asst Comm Mthombeni.

He said corruption was rife in both the public and private sector, adding that only a collective effort by stakeholders could put an end to it.

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### NEW BLOOD IVORY SEIZURE IN HONG KONG TRACED BACK TO KENYA

Reports are coming in from global conservation sources that authorities in Hong Kong have seized another 1.3 tons of blood ivory, stashed away in a container marked as being loaded with 'architectural stones' from Kenya. This latest find, the third major seizure of blood ivory in recent weeks, reveals the shocking level of smuggling and trading in ivory from poached elephant across the African continent.

While Tanzania has for long been at the centre of poaching in East Africa, a parliamentary report in mid of last year suggesting that as many as 30 elephant were being poached per day, Kenya and indeed Uganda have not been spared of the menace. Tanzania's no nonsense Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Amb. Khamis Kageshiki, has of late led the efforts to crack down on poaching in Tanzania but it has been acknowledged that it will take time to win this battle after poaching was spinning out of control for too long.

Usually well informed source in Nairobi contacted about the shipment coming from Mombasa pointed out that the port, as indeed the international airport in Nairobi, was regularly being used as transit and exit point for contraband smuggled from third countries into Kenya. Kenya Wildlife Service in conjunction with Customs are now habitually screening air cargo in Nairobi using sniffer dogs, which has led to significantly increase confiscation and prosecutions in Kenya, but the latest find in Hong Kong of a container shipped from Mombasa via Malaysia shows that more needs to be done.

The forthcoming meeting of CITES in the Thai capital Bangkok in a few weeks time will be faced with loud demands to withdraw China's trading status for ivory, as conservationists have seen a sharp rise in demand from China since it attained this status in 2008, with the Chinese government seemingly doing far too little to crack down on the demand side and subsequently being complicit in the decimation of Africa's wildlife resources. Tanzania two weeks ago also withdrew an application to CITES to sell over 100 tons of so called legal ivory after facing huge opposition from global conservation groups which threatened to decampaign the country as a tourism destination. The move was welcomed by other East African countries too since at last there is now an opportunity to agree on a common strategy of what to do with the growing ivory stocks now held in TANAPA, KWS and UWA strongrooms.

At the same time did poaching of rhinos in 2012 reach another record level with about 650 of the prized animals killed in South Africa alone, while in recent months a spate of rhino killings also took place in Kenya. Here, as is the case with elephant, is China and Vietnam reportedly the largest market, despite of the now scientifically proven fact that ground rhino horn has exactly zero medicinal properties. Watch this space for regular conservation updates from the Eastern African region.

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## THE SMILE

Two bits of stories from the Herald in Zimbabwe

### **Typhoid is reported in Harare**

*In an interview on Monday, head of the health services department at Harare City Council, Dr Stanley Mungofa said the situation was now under control and attributed the few cases of diarrhoea diseases to increased uptake of food as a result of the festive season.*

*"Many people are either eating food that they are not used to or that is poorly prepared as they party during this season and that is the chief cause of stomach upsets in the city. ..."*

**And here is another Herald special about the coming gold rush ...**

*ZIMBABWE is headed for a gold rush that will see people in most parts of the country picking up the precious mineral from the ground as God begins to offer divine solutions to the country's challenges, United Family International Church leader Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa has said.*

*Ministering to more than 30 000 congregants, who thronged UFIC's Chitungwiza church for a cross over service on New Year's eve, Prophet Makandiwa hinted that lives for most Zimbabweans would soon be transformed for the better stressing that gold and not diamonds, would in the long run become the country's most priced mineral.*

*"The Lord is setting Zimbabwe free. Divine solutions are coming. The Lord told me 'Tell Zimbabweans to change their focus.' Everyone is saying diamonds, diamonds, but I see another precious mineral for Zimbabwe . . . gold will be picked up from the ground. Mysteriously gold will be appearing everywhere."*

*"As I was praying I saw a wind blowing and I saw gold coming to the surface. People are going to be picking up gold without any drilling. ...*

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Have a good week. If you don't hear from me next week it will be because I am away. I am attempting to take my car for a spin into Namibia, but knowing my luck it will get to my gate and break down.

Gill