

# UNLV

MAGAZINE

SPRING 2009



**How is the budget crisis changing UNLV?**



**\* President David Ashley answers Page 3**

**The numbers tell the story Page 8**



# the Future is NOW

DANA ANAT WANTED A SECOND CHANCE, AND NOW SHE HAS IT THANKS TO UNLV'S OSHER RE-ENTRY SCHOLARSHIP FOR RETURNING STUDENTS. DANA IS MAKING THE MOST OF HER FRESH START BY COMPLETING HER DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. WITH ASPIRATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW, SHE'LL BE ABLE TO FULFILL HER LIFE'S PASSION – PRESERVING SOUTHERN NEVADA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

HER COMMITMENT  
TO EDUCATION IS HER  
FUTURE. THE FUTURE  
IS NOW.



[campaign.unlv.edu](http://campaign.unlv.edu)

# Will there be a UNLV for me?

**IT IS A PROVOCATIVE QUESTION**, and one that was asked in earnest on campus and throughout the community this year. As we explained in the spring 2008 issue ([magazine.unlv.edu](http://magazine.unlv.edu)), UNLV was preparing for a drop in state funding even before the current economic downturn began eroding Nevada's coffers.

By the time this issue reaches you, the Legislature may have established the budget for the next two fiscal years. No matter the final numbers, one thing is certain: The current economic crisis will take a toll on the state's higher education system. This challenge too shall pass, however, and UNLV will continue progressing in areas vital to our future success.

**We will have a framework for building upon our strengths.** One way we positioned ourselves for budget cuts was to institute a hiring freeze, leaving more than 360 vacancies in faculty and staff. Short term, this is hampering our ability to meet student needs (see page 8). Long term, however, I believe this will enable us to focus on our strengths. As our economy recovers and we identify and secure additional resources, we will restore positions with careful consideration of how to build our most vital and promising programs.

**We will have formed new partnerships.** The budget situation forced us out of the status quo. On the academic side, for example, we recently introduced our first joint Ph.D. program with UNR (in public health); I do not

**More info:** Follow the budget issue at [unlv.edu/budget](http://unlv.edu/budget).



believe such a partnership would have been embraced as strongly if both of the state's universities had better funding.

Another example can be seen in the Division of Educational Outreach, which has been very entrepreneurial in expanding online course offerings. By working with local businesses, the division is adapting to the community's workforce development needs as those needs change.

In the future, you will also see more public-private partnerships, such as the one that helped the College of Urban Affairs bring environmentally friendly design features to the new Greenspun Hall (see page 4). In the Engineering College, a collaboration with NV Energy provided resources to create a minor in solar and renewable energy.

**We will address funding inequities.** As long as anyone can remember, education has been a victim to the swings of Nevada's budget cycles. There is a significant disparity between UNLV's funding and its mission. I believe the crisis has created resolve within our leaders to act on these tough issues and to place education at the top of the state's priority list.

**We will have stronger advocates for higher education.** Finally, this crisis created lifelong advocates for UNLV. I have been very impressed with the way students have engaged in the budget debate (see "The Young and the Restless," page 22). It also prompted many community leaders, donors, and alumni like you to re-engage with the university and speak up for the needs of higher education. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed. Our sincere thanks goes to you for supporting UNLV through this time and ensuring that there will indeed be a strong UNLV for future generations.

*David B. Ashley*  
**David B. Ashley,**  
UNLV President

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# THE Flashlight

## BRIEFLY

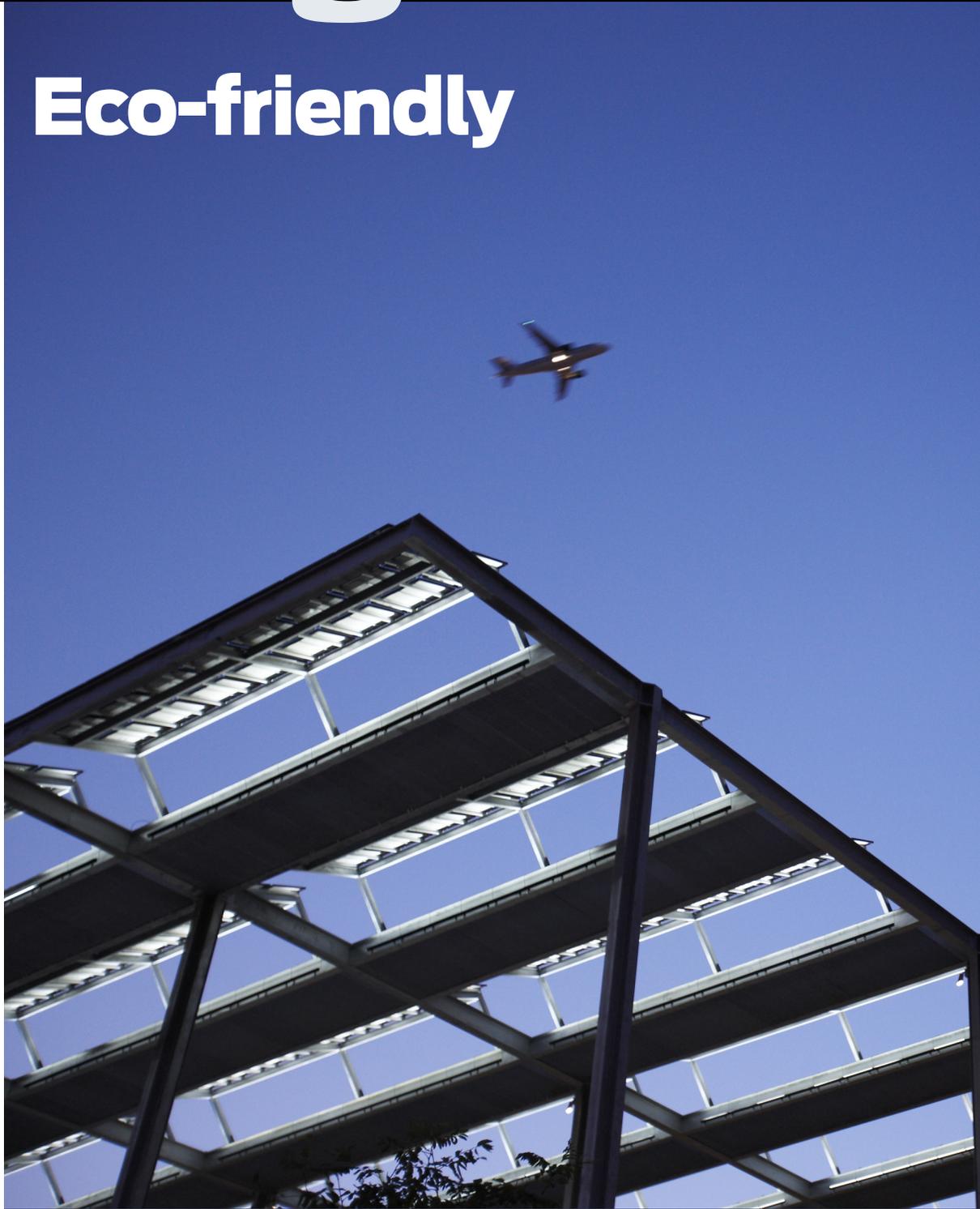
### Virtual life

Las Vegas may lose its landmarks to the sands of time, but visiting Italian students are bringing them back. Using technology common in video games, the students from Politecnico di Torino recreated the Sands resort circa 1960. This spring, a second team is making the Stardust more than a memory.

Their research draws upon the archives in UNLV Libraries, including more than 600 pictures and video footage to recreate such details as the patterns of the carpet to the "S" on the Sands' napkins. The 3-D tour walks viewers through the property, allowing them to play virtual roulette as they are immersed in the history of the casino.

The Politecnico students are working under the direction of UNLV's entertainment engineering & design program. UNLV and the Italian university are partnering to advance both institutions' entertainment engineering programs, which merge technical theater

## Eco-friendly



**WITH AN ENERGY-PRODUCING CANOPY, LOW-FLOW WATER FIXTURES,** and a design that minimizes light pollution, UNLV's newest building is also its first to target the gold standard in green design.

Greenspun Hall sits on a prime location on Maryland Parkway next to the Student Union. It is targeting a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold certification.

The 120,000-square-foot building consists of four interconnected towers. Its photovoltaic array shades the facility's distinctive courtyard and will offset about 13 percent of the building's energy consumption. A chilled-beam heating and cooling system is expected to save \$83,000 per year over traditional systems.



The facility brought most of the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs units into one location to foster collaboration among departments. The college — which includes environmental studies, social work, journalism, public administration, criminal justice, communication studies, and marriage and family therapy — addresses many quality-of-life issues in the region. Its 190-seat auditorium hosts classes as well as community events.

The construction project is an example of the kind of public-private partnerships UNLV is forming to advance as an institution amidst tight budget times. The Greenspun Family Foundation contributed \$37 million, or 40 percent of the building's construction costs, for the project. It is the largest single donation to UNLV and one of the largest in state history. State funds covered the rest of the project's costs.

**BRIEFLY**  
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studies and traditional engineering.

Follow the Re-Living Las Vegas project online at **stardust.polito.it/rllv**. A demo lets you walk through the Sands main entrance and pool.

**DON'T MISS IT**  
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**Peace in the Desert Lecture:** "Superpowers and Rogue States: Reducing Nuclear Danger," 7 p.m. May 26, Student Union Theater. Featuring Robert Litwak, director of international security studies at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and Stephen Younger, president of National Securities Technologies and a senior policy scholar at the center. The event is a collaboration between the center and UNLV's Saltman Center for Conflict Resolution. [law.unlv.edu](http://law.unlv.edu)

**Photo Exhibit:** "Down the Colorado & Bypassed Byways," through Aug. 28, Barrick Museum. Geri Kodey, UNLV photo services manager, and husband Wayne Kodey share their travels through the Colorado River Basin and along Route 66. [hrc.nevada.edu](http://hrc.nevada.edu)

NEWSMAKERS



**UPPER-CRUST STUDENT:** Geoscience graduate student **Amanda J. Williams** received the Farouk El-Baz Student Award from the Geological Society of America. She received the national honor along with a \$2,500 prize to work on her dissertation, “Biological Soil Crusts in the Mojave.” She will employ a novel interdisciplinary approach to better understand the basic requirements of life through the primitive organisms living under extreme conditions at the surface of desert soils. To model the complex system, she’ll use biology, ecology, soil science, hydrology, statistics, chemistry, geomorphology, GIS, and remote sensing.

**A SHINING YOUNG STAR:** Innovative solar energy research has earned chemistry professor Dong-Chan Lee the National Science Foundation’s prestigious CAREER award. Lee will receive \$484,000 over five years to apply his expertise in synthetic chemistry to improve solar cell technology. The award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on scientists and engineers beginning their careers.

## One person at a time

Las Vegas has a high rate of problem gambling but a low number of counselors trained to deal with it — a problem UNLV is tackling one person at a time.

The UNLV Problem Gambling Treatment Program provides one-on-one counseling to clients while training graduate students to fill the critical need for practicing specialists. UNLV’s counselor education program is one of the few that specifically addresses this addiction.

**Lindsey Harrison**, recipient of the Harrah’s Graduate Assistantship in Problem Gambling, sees clients in the program. Even in a recession, the Las Vegas native says, the clients for problem gambling are increasing. Her clients refer themselves and are attracted by the individual sessions because many are uncomfortable with group therapy sessions.

Harrison says that with the assistantship, which includes funding for tuition in addition to the experience, she was able to give up her part-time jobs and focus on school and the work related to her career.



“I’m happy that I have this graduate assistantship because I have more experience seeing clients face to face, which has helped me tremendously,” says Harrison. “I’ve gotten more experience and more hands-on work.”

Harrison, who holds a bachelor’s degree in counseling from UNLV, will receive her master’s degree in mental health and addictions this May. She plans to work in outpatient crisis counseling, with a focus on gambling addictions. “As soon as I graduate, I want to help and be a mentor for other people who want to become gambling counselors in the field.”

—MICHELLE MOUTON

## No drama in the courtroom



UNLV’s Kids’ Court School participants go through a mock trial at UNLV to prepare for their own court appearances.

Law and graduate education students use a model courtroom and wooden figurines to explain judicial procedures to the young participants. The children also learn how to cope with anxiety while testifying.

Nearly 300 children have taken part in the free program. Kids’ Court School typically serves children ages 4-17. The majority have been victims of crimes, Nathanson said.

**THE CLOSEST MOST PEOPLE COME TO A COURTROOM** is by watching an episode of *Law and Order*. Now imagine a kid experiencing such drama in real life. The Kids’ Court School at the Boyd School of Law helps alleviate the angst of children caught up in the court system.

Rebecca Nathanson, a professor of education and law, started the program in 2003 because her research told her that giving young witnesses more knowledge about the judicial process could make them feel less ner-

**More info:** Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic, 702-895-2323, [www.law.unlv.edu/clinic.html](http://www.law.unlv.edu/clinic.html)



### TOOLS OF THE TRADE

## The Tool:

A badge and Nutro Natural Choice dog food

## The User:

Bea, UNLV's bomb-sniffing dog

**W**ill work for food is Bea's motto. The 3-year-old Labrador must perform her duties as a police dog to get her 3 cups of kibble a day. Bea and her handler, UNLV police officer William Burkett, were trained by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to sniff out

19,000 kinds of explosives. The inseparable duo patrol the campus and work major events such as the Mountain West Basketball Tournament, National Finals Rodeo, and last year's presidential campaign appearances.

Fortunately, Burkett notes, Bea has yet to unearth any bombs. So to make sure she gets to eat (and to keep her nose sharp), officers hide tainted items, such as shell casings, for her to sniff out. Bea is so motivated by food that she'll sometimes try to trick Burkett; he knows the signs, though, and doesn't take her bait. "She'll try anything," he says and then chides her. Bea tosses her head slightly, as if to shrug, and goes back to work.

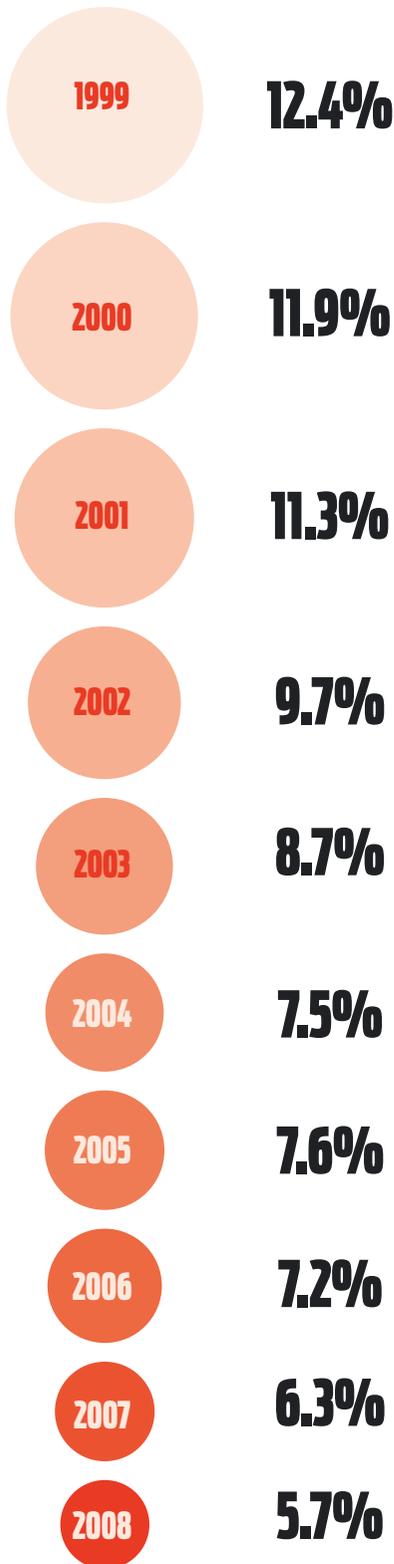
### NEWSMAKERS



**WHAT WOULD THE BARD THINK?:** **Charles Whitney** garnered honors for overturning the oft-held assumption that we could never know how the earliest audiences responded to the plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and other Renaissance dramatists. He won the 2008 Elizabeth Dietz Award for best book in early modern studies for his landmark work, *Early Responses to Renaissance Drama*. Through painstaking archival research and close study of period texts carried out over 14 years, Whitney presents a convincing picture of what people in Shakespeare's time actually thought about plays.

**INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT\***

[as a Percent of Total Expenditures]



\*Day-to-day operating expenses including general administration, central executive-level management, legal operations, space management, human resources, purchasing, public relations, and development.

special report

# Number Crunching

When budgets are tight, every number gets scrutinized. Here are a few statistics that say a lot about UNLV's challenges this year.

**T**HE REASON FOR CUTS TO FACULTY AND STAFF, as you probably could guess, is the economy. As tax revenues took a dive along

with the tourism and real estate markets, budget cuts were passed on to state agencies. UNLV's state funding was slashed by \$25 million, or 8 percent, last year. And the budget for the next two years likewise looks challenging.

More than 75 percent of state funds go toward employee salaries and benefits, so absorbing cuts in the multimillions is impossible without affecting the employment rolls. Last year UNLV offered buy-outs to longtime employees and did not renew the contracts of nearly 100 employees. Scheduled merit raises for the remaining employees were delayed for six months. And administrators implemented a hiring freeze. Only positions deemed critical, such as those tied to compliance, have been filled.

How's all this affecting the students? With fewer instructors, students found that getting into classes at the preferred time became more difficult. Their class size also increased, at least to the extent possible given the occupancy limits of lecture halls. So far, students' progress toward

their degree goals has been minimally affected. Outside the classroom, the processing times for paperwork got a little longer and things like trash pickups and office hours were reduced.

**SOME OF THE SAVINGS MEASURES** were no-brainers — steps UNLV would have taken regardless of budget cuts. For example, UNLV took advantage of the Las Vegas Valley Water District's rebates to pay for water-smart landscaping, reducing water use by 45 percent. Crews just started another turf-reduction project to lower utility costs even more. And thanks to new energy-saving systems, electricity and natural gas consumption have decreased despite growth in the campus population.

Those moneywise measures brought top honors from the Nevada Taxpayers Association. The independent watchdog group awarded the facilities management department the 2009 Cashman Good Government Award for its efficient use of state funds.

While happy that the award recognizes his division's efforts, Gerry Bomotti, executive vice president for business and finance, notes that some of the measures — delaying building maintenance and computer replacements, for example — cannot be sustained.



UNLV is now at an all-time low in the percentage of expenditures that goes toward institutional support. This standard measure of overhead-type expenses has been cut in half since 2000. “We are at a rate well below other regional research universities, and likely too low to provide required support for students and faculty,” Bomotti says. “There’s just not much more that can be cut from the operations side.”

**UNLV’S FRESHMAN ENROLLMENT** is the largest and most diverse, and they got

in under tougher admissions standards. So far administrators do not foresee a threat to the value of their future degrees.

Last year, in collaboration with area leaders, UNLV developed a strategic plan to prune back the explosive growth of the previous decade. It clarifies the areas that the university must focus on to best serve Southern Nevada.

“The nature of this kind of short-term crisis is that it forces you to fully understand what areas are most vital and must

be protected as well as what areas hold the most promise and may require investments even during tough economic times. That’s true on campus and in our community,” President David B. Ashley says. “Southern Nevada will continue to need UNLV — the only public university in the region — but our growth will continue as a more mature operation advancing in very focused ways.”

**More info:** See **From the President**, page 3, for more on how UNLV will evolve through the budget crisis. Or visit [www.unlv.edu/budget](http://www.unlv.edu/budget).

## CUTS

**14.9** percent of positions unfilled or eliminated at UNLV this spring compared to last, including 97 faculty and 267 staff positions

**25** percent cut to part-time instructor budget

**1,000** fewer class sections offered this academic year

**\$1.5 million** saved by eliminating or combining a number of dean, vice president, and associate vice president positions

## SAVINGS

**\$89 million** in budget reductions, cost-savings programs, and deferred expenses over the last few years — about 30 percent of the state budget for UNLV

**45 million** gallons of water conserved annually by turf-reduction projects, reducing utility costs by about \$135,000 a year

**38** percent reduction in electricity and natural gas usage per square foot since 2000

**\$1 million** saved by reducing janitorial services

## ENROLLMENT

**28,605** total students enrolled, up 2.5 percent over the last two years

**9.3** percent growth in freshman enrollment in fall '08 over '07

**36.6** percent minority enrollment, up from less than 23 percent in 2000

**66.1** percent projected increase in Nevada’s high school graduates by 2018. The national average will be a modest 7.9 percent

BRIEFLY  
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## Hittin' the Books

UNLV had 45 student-athletes earn fall 2008 Academic All-Mountain West Conference (MWC) honors, a new school record.

To be eligible, student-athletes must have completed at least one academic term while maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA, and be a starter or significant contributor on their team.

Junior **Jessica Walters**, a journalism major and three-time Academic All-MWC in volleyball, topped all Rebels with a 3.96 GPA.

# Desert Slapshots

## Students work off the ice to push young hockey team to 25-4 season

BY SHANE BEVELL

Stopping opponents from scoring is the easy part of senior Ryan Krametbauer's job as the UNLV hockey team's top defender. His duties as the club team's captain and president are far more daunting: scheduling opponents, organizing travel arrangements, creating game programs, and recruiting volunteers to work home games. It's not usual stuff for athletes on winning teams.

Unlike official NCAA teams, sports clubs like hockey can't offer scholarships or support staff to help with logistics. The team raises money to keep out-of-pocket costs low, but player dues can run into the thousands of dollars. And the coaches receive a modest stipend at best.

What club teams lack financially is made up in leadership possibilities and an outlet for athletic competition, Krametbauer says. "I have learned so much from being exposed to the business side of the sport," the political science honors student says. "I worked with an accountant to file 501c(3) paperwork to become a nonprofit organization. I don't know too many college students who know how to file for nonprofit status with the IRS. You can't put a price on that kind of experience."

### HARD WORK PAYING DIVIDENDS

The hockey club finished the season 25-4, the team's best record since forming four years ago. The Rebels advanced to the American Collegiate Hockey Association Division 2 West Regional but lost 3-2 in the first round to Eastern Washington University.

Krametbauer and alternate captain Anthony Greener attribute this year's success to coach Rob Pallin, who played at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and professionally in Europe.

Pallin took over midway through the 2006-07 season after a group of players, including Krametbauer,

asked him to be the head coach. The team finished 2008 with a 13-13-4 record, and then Pallin focused on recruiting. He looks for character and speed, in that order. "Character kids will help you weather the storm. They have a solid foundation. Character is more important than talent," he says.

With no scholarships to offer, Pallin needs players disciplined enough to stay on top of classwork and late-night practices. Ice time is hard to come by, so the practices often start at 9:30 p.m. at the ice arena at the Fiesta Rancho Casino, where Pallin is rink manager.

He keeps players driven by not guaranteeing roster spots from one year to the next. "Even if you were the points leader the previous year, you have to earn your way onto the team each fall during try-outs," Greener says.

"It was very difficult when I had to cut seven kids from last year's team," says Pallin, "but it had to be done in order for us to get better."

Now with a winning reputation, recruiting is easier, and Pallin has found a lot of luck locally. "Now kids call me and ask to come play at UNLV," Pallin says. "That's a good barometer of how far our program has come."

Krametbauer and Greener both grew up in Las Vegas and ditched the baseball bat for a hockey stick before the age of 10. Pallin coached both as teenagers in youth sports.

Krametbauer is set to graduate in May and Greener in December — something Greener didn't expect to happen until the hockey team came along. He had attended UNLV for a semester but thought college wasn't for him. After Krametbauer asked him to come play for the fledgling team, Greener gave it a second shot. The team, the business management major says, gave him the focus he needed to be both a student and an athlete.



## The UNLV Club Scene

Student-managed club teams at UNLV include baseball, bowling, rugby, table tennis and men's soccer. This spring, university studies major **Jerome Foster** trained with UNLV's boxing club. The club has taken many titles over the years, including the 2006 National Collegiate Boxing Association championship. The inline hockey team placed second in the Western Regional Tournament this semester, advancing to the College Roller Hockey National Championships in Pennsylvania.



## BRIEFLY

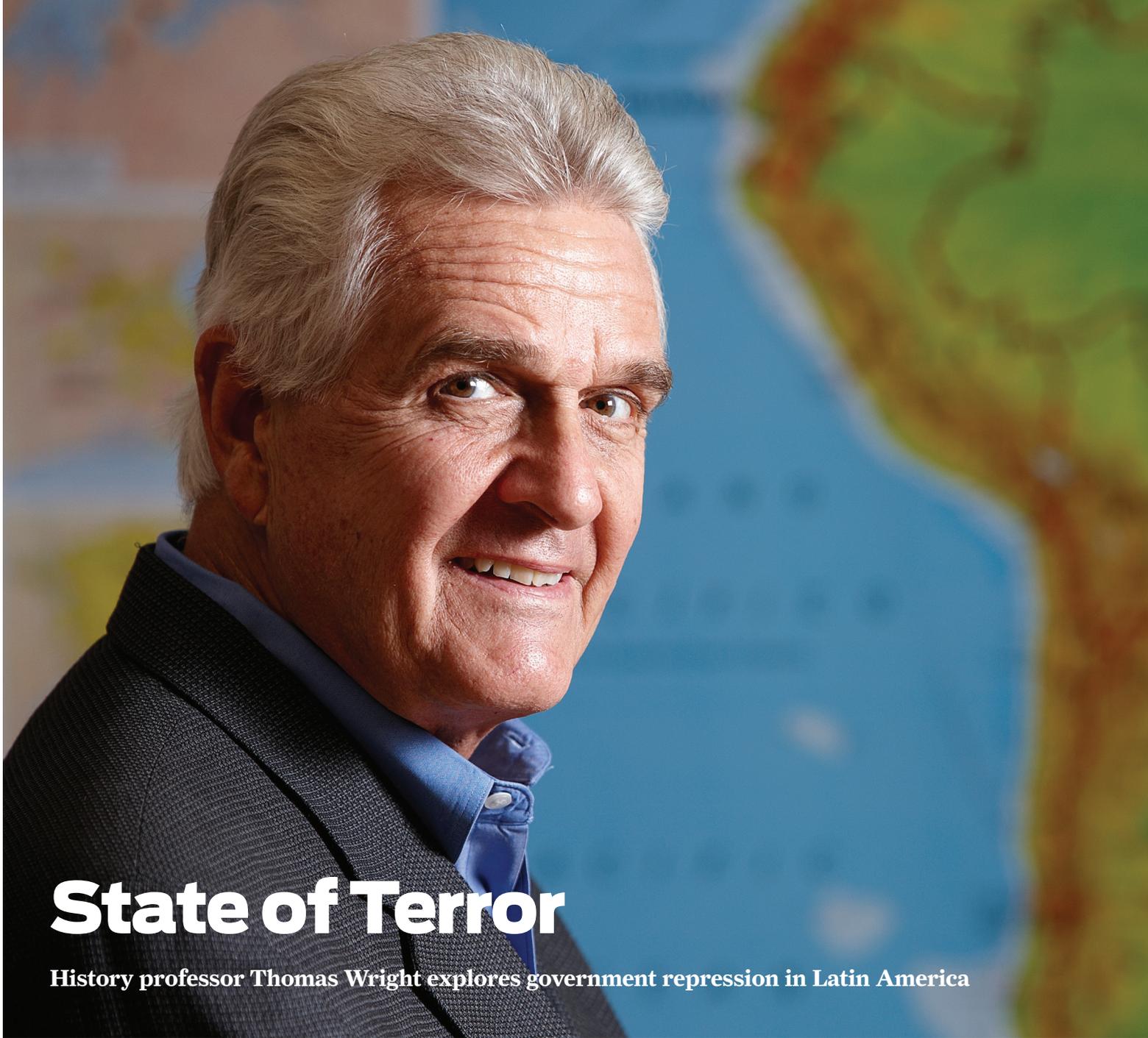


## Five Straight

The men's swimming and diving team cruised to its fifth straight league championship in February. The margin of victory was the largest ever in the 10-year history of the Mountain West Conference (MWC) Championships. The women's team finished as runners-up for the second straight year.

Sophomore Kier Maitland was named MWC Men's Swimmer of the Year and freshman **Zsuzsanna Jakabos** was honored as the MWC Women's Swimmer of the Year. Jim Reitz was also named MWC Men's Coach of the Year for the sixth time.

Ryan Krametbauer and Anthony Greener led the hockey team to a 25-4 season and a regional tournament appearance just four years after the team's founding.



# State of Terror

History professor Thomas Wright explores government repression in Latin America

Someone researching terrorism might be expected to keep a low profile, but Tom Wright interviewed numerous individuals with questionable connections and attended many public demonstrations in the course of writing *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights*.

His thorough scholarship has earned him the highest award given by the Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies, an organization that, despite the geographic narrowness of its name, draws scholars from across the continent.

The recently named UNLV Distinguished Professor describes *State Terrorism* as the natural outgrowth of his earlier work on Latin America. “I’ve researched and written primarily about 20th-century political history, so one project normally connects in some way to the next,” he says.

However, *State Terrorism* has a particular connection to his 1998 book, *Flight from Chile: Voices of Exile*. Many of the people Wright interviewed for it had been jailed and tortured prior to leaving Chile.

“Most had lost friends, family members,

or fellow party or union members to the repression,” he remembers. “So I learned that exile was just the tip of the iceberg, and I began to contemplate a book on state terrorism and human rights.”

His determination to write the book was reinforced by a visit in 2000 to a San Salvador museum where six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter had been maimed and killed by a government-sponsored death squad in the 1980s.

“Seeing this piece of state terrorism in the other geographic extreme of Latin America

**The Neolithic Revolution in the Near East: Transforming the Human Landscape**

University of Arizona Press, 2007

The shift from hunting and gathering to food production and permanent village life changed the way humans interacted with their environment and with each other, says professor Alan Simmons in his latest book. Simmons, chair of anthropology and ethnic studies, specializes in Near East archeology.

**Commodore Perry's Minstrel Show**

University of Texas Press, 2007

This is a prequel to *Soldiers in Hiding*, the PEN/Faulkner award-winning novel of English professor Richard Wiley. Author Russell Banks says of the work, which is set in Japan, "Richard Wiley is one of the few American novelists with the will and ability to penetrate a culture not his own with the requisite alacrity and intelligent respect."

**Straight Ahead**

Jazz Ensemble I, 2006-07

**One Hand**

Jazz Ensemble I, 2005-06

**Reunion,**

Contemporary Jazz Ensemble

While you're curled up with a good book, how about playing some smooth jazz? The award-winning UNLV jazz program released *Straight Ahead* and *One Hand* to mark the university's 50th anniversary celebration and feature outstanding student performances under the direction of David Loeb and Bruce Paulson. *Reunion* is by the Contemporary Jazz Ensemble, described by Loeb as "a select group of 10 of our top jazz student musicians," and conducted by David Perrico. The recording includes a mix of old favorites such as "It Don't Mean a Thing."

been shot and maimed by the repressors on a Buenos Aires street, but still had managed to escape and eventually go into exile.

Wright says one of the most interesting demonstrations he attended was in 2002 in Buenos Aires by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the most emblematic human rights group in Argentina. Mothers had gathered in the plaza in front of the presidential palace in 1977 to petition for information about their children who had disappeared. They adopted diaper-inspired scarves as their symbol and continued to press the government for answers.

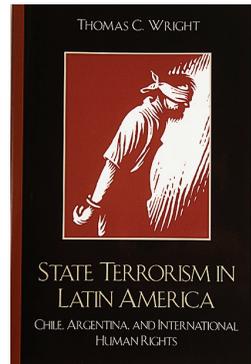
By 2002, the mothers were aging and wanted to pass the torch to the next generation in a

newer human rights organization, Children for Identity and Justice and against Forgetting and Silence (HIJOS). Wright witnessed the ceremonial taking off of the scarves and tying them around the necks of the younger activists who are children (hijos in Spanish) of disappeared parents. He also talked with a number of parents whose children had disappeared. "I couldn't believe their courage," he says.

Wright became intrigued by Latin America when, as an undergraduate at Pomona College in the early 1960s, he spent his junior year in Peru. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Berkeley in the subject before joining UNLV faculty in 1972, following in the footsteps of his father, history professor John Wright, for whom Wright Hall is named. He previously served as history department chair as well as dean of the former College of Arts and Letters.

The historian has written three other books, numerous articles, book chapters and entries in encyclopedias about Latin America, as well as a local history, *The Peoples of Las Vegas: One City Many Faces*, co-edited with political science professor Jerry Simich. A sequel covering additional ethnic groups is with a publisher.

**Barbara Cloud** is emeritus professor of journalism at UNLV. Her latest book, *The Coming of the Frontier Press: How the West was Really Won*, has just been published by Northwestern University Press.



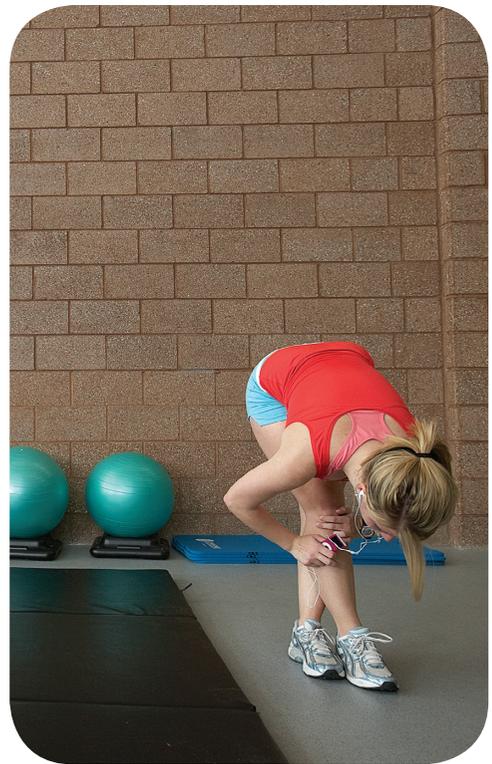
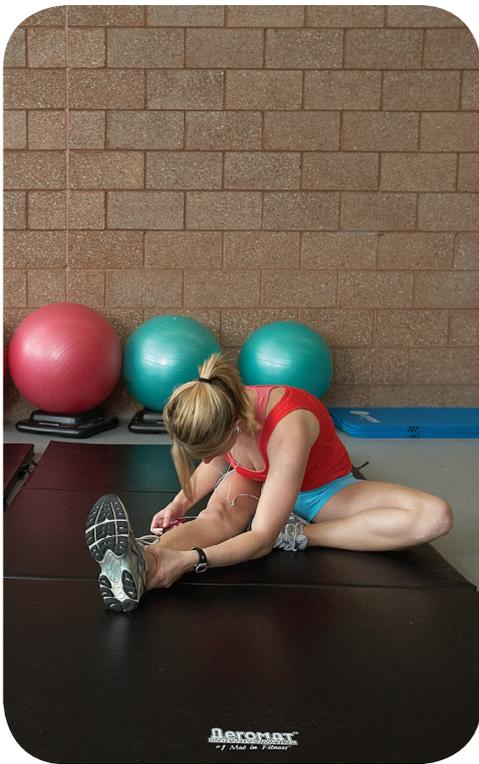
**State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights.**

BY THOMAS C. WRIGHT  
Rowman and Littlefield, 2007

strengthened my resolve to do a book on that topic," he says. "Originally I imagined comparing the four worst cases — Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, and El Salvador — but decided the first two were too different from the second two and the book would be too superficial."

For *State Terrorism*, Wright's interviews ranged from Madrid to Buenos Aires.

Among the Madrid interviewees was Carlos Slepoy, a man at the forefront of Argentine exile activity in Spain. At the 2001 interview Wright noticed that Slepoy walked with a pronounced limp and used a cane. He later learned that Slepoy had



# Stretching: The Truth

A powerful warm-up routine needs to be tailored to your sport

BY TONY ALLEN

For all you weekend warriors whose athletic dreams were dashed at high school graduation, a new study might conveniently excuse the lack of power in your play. Contrary to what coach said, it turns out that stretching before you play can reduce athletic performance.

The study found that certain stretching techniques for the hamstrings and quadriceps lowered strength and power output in high-performance male and female athletes. Power was significantly reduced in those who performed the static stretches (the kind where you hold the stretch) for the typical 90 seconds. Bouncing stretches didn't significantly affect performance.

"Stretching is an important part of reducing sports injury, but the time to stretch is after performance, not before," says kinesiology professor Bill Holcomb, who also heads the UNLV Sports Injury Research Center.

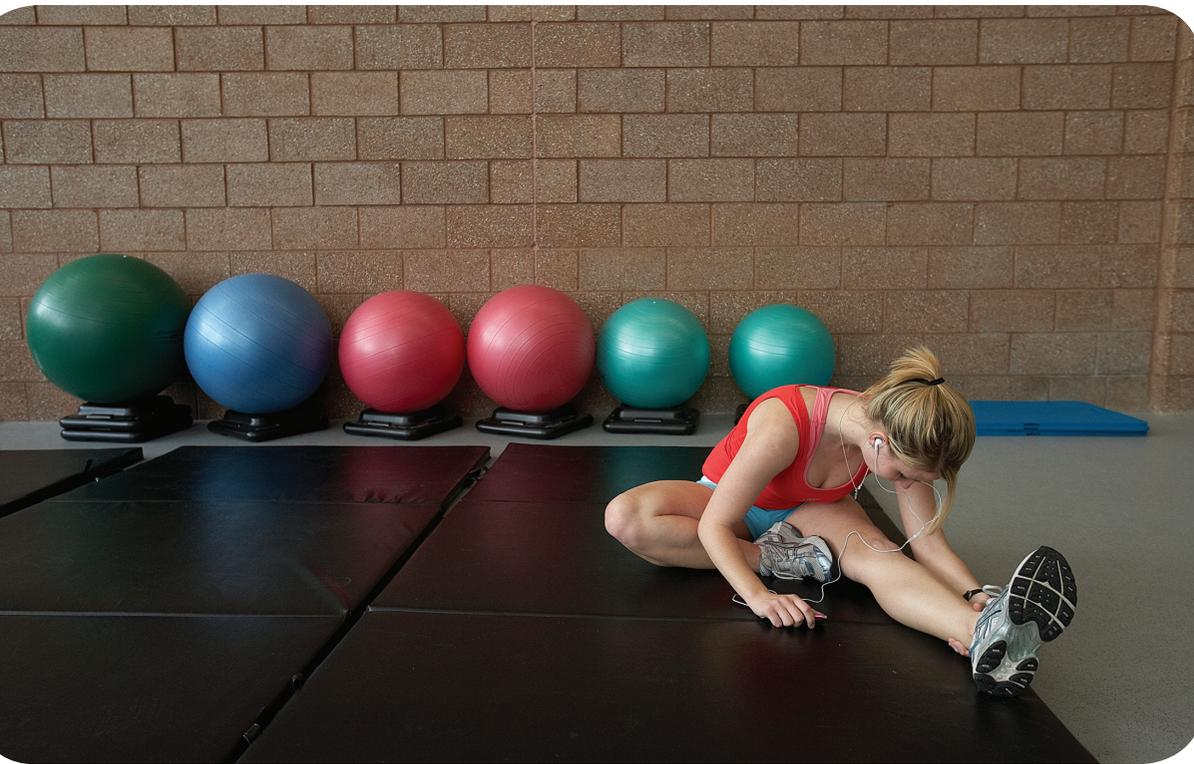
So, why have gym instructors offered bad advice for so long?

Picture the energy stored in your muscles like an elastic band. Static stretches before playing release some of that stored energy so there's less power to tap during the performance. If you skip the precompetition static stretch, you may not be as flexible (which can cause its own problems), but your maximum power output will improve.

"For years we've known that muscles lengthen during athletic performance; therefore, we thought that stretching before activity would prepare those muscles to lengthen and reduce injury," says Holcomb, a longtime athletic trainer. "Studies like ours found that if you do static stretching, muscles are prepared to lengthen for injury prevention, but at the expense of force and power."

But don't forgo those warm-ups before you hop on the treadmill just yet. While the findings are significant for competitive athletes in sports that demand bursts of power, like track and football, recreational athletes are another matter. The real point is that warm-up and cool-down routines need

"Stretching is an important part of reducing sports injury, but the time to stretch is after performance, not before."



to be customized to your activity, age, and athletic ability.

Take a children's soccer team, for example. "Range of motion is important to the sport, but normally, when the game is over, the kids have no organized cool down," says Holcomb. "If they performed basic dynamic (sport-specific) exercises during warm-up and took a few minutes to do some simple static stretches after the game, it would improve the range of motion they'll need to be both effective and injury-free when they play."

Still not sure what you should be doing? You're not alone. Though most researchers recommend sport-specific warm-ups and those holding stretches for the cool down, according to Holcomb, they don't agree on how to stretch appropriately for specific activities. Many, including other UNLV kinesiology researchers, are trying to find that perfect cocktail of static, ballistic, and dynamic stretching to both improve performance and stave off pesky injuries.

## EXPERT ADVICE ON ICE

The number one question people on the street ask top athletic trainer Bill Holcomb: Ice or heat?

"People still get it mixed up," Holcomb says. "Ice, and nothing but ice, regardless of injury, for the first three days."

After three days of ice to reduce swelling, heat can be added. "During rehab, we may use heat prior to activity and ice after, since rehab exercises can create inflammation. Using heat too early may delay healing," he says.

Holcomb literally wrote the book on injury training; *Practical Skills Manual for Evaluation of Athletic Injuries* is the standard textbook across the country. He is a certified athletic trainer and has been a professor of athletic training for 17 years, teaching at UNLV, North Florida, and San Jose State University. In 2007, he helped train Chinese Olympic team doctors for the 2008 Beijing Games. He is one of fewer than 50 fellows of the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

## THIS JUST IN

### Musseling In

**2,916,277,120,353** adult and juvenile quagga mussels, an invasive species, in the Boulder Basin area of Lake Mead

**0** detectable quagga mussels in the South Cove area of Lake Mead in spring 2007

**54,000** quagga mussels per square meter in the South Cove area in 2008

**148** days for quagga mussels to filter all of Lake Mead

**\$1 billion** spent each year to manage quagga and zebra mussel populations in North America

— from inaugural Lake Mead Science Symposium hosted by the UNLV School of Community Health Sciences in January. Quagga mussels were first detected in the lake in early 2007. The plankton-guzzling mussels can harm native species and foul up drinking water supplies.

### At-risk kids

**36 percent** of Nevada kindergartners are overweight or at risk of being overweight

**18 percent** have no health insurance

**32 percent** have not received routine dental care in the past year

**25 percent** have been to the emergency room or urgent care for nonlife-threatening illnesses in the past year

**16 percent** of their parents either cannot or do not follow doctor recommendations in dealing with their child's medical care

— from "Kindergarten Health Report," by the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy at UNLV. The survey provides a school-by-school assessment of children's health and will be used by the state's public schools to target parent outreach and health education programs. Visit: [nic.unlv.edu](http://nic.unlv.edu)

BRIEFLY  
.....

## Too hot to trot

Replacing grass with artificial turf can save water and money, but may be too hot for summer fun.

Researchers from UNLV and the Desert Research Institute (DRI) found that the maximum surface temperature of green artificial turfgrass was about 69 degrees higher than irrigated natural grass. The study recorded surface temperatures as high as 169 degrees — 46 degrees higher than what is considered safe.

“Green artificial turfgrass reacted much more quickly to solar radiation than did any other surface in our study, including concrete, asphalt, natural grass, and white artificial turfgrass,” said Dale Devitt, professor of soil and water.

Devitt notes that this study is not a rationale against the use of artificial turfgrass, but rather a caveat to park managers. He encourages them to consider using more reflective colors to minimize surface temperatures.

The study was published in the *Journal of Turfgrass and Sports Surface Science* and was funded in part by the city of Las Vegas.

—GIAN GALASSI

## Golden years in the Silver State

What do Nevadans over the age of 50 do? They visit family and friends more often than they go to casinos, they go to casinos more than church, and they pray when faced with distress. When pressed to stop driving, they hand over the steering wheel to another 80-year-old — a spouse.

This data appears in a two-year study released by UNLV’s Cannon Survey Center. The “Portrait of Nevada Seniors” captures the lifestyle of Nevada’s older generations, as well as clear pockets of need, says Pam Gallion, director of the center. For example, more than half of Nevadans over 50 have chronic illnesses. “There can be a period of up to 15 years when individuals under the age of 65 are not covered by health insurance because they are not yet eligible for Medicare, lost a job that had insurance, or cannot afford the cost of health care.”

Assemblywoman Kathy McClain hopes the study will spark legislative action on senior and veteran’s issues. “I think in Nevada, we have spent so much

time trying to help keep our children healthy and educated and have not been able to accomplish that to the level we would like, that the senior population has become a secondary issue,” McClain says.

Before the economic downturn, the state’s senior population was on the rise, Gallion notes. Job opportunities, low cost of living, entertainment, climate, and tax structure encouraged the move to the Silver State. McClain believes future studies (this was the first of its kind) will help policymakers address emerging needs. “The first two-year study gave us some great baseline information, but we need to follow up to be able to see the trends and also how a senior’s circumstances have changed, especially now with the economic downturn we are experiencing,” McClain says.

The study was conducted through a \$100,000 grant from the Task Force for a Healthy Nevada. Researchers, comprised of mostly college seniors, made more than 200,000 calls in Clark County, Washoe County, Carson City, and rural Nevada.

—AFSHA BAWANY

**More info:** Read the “Portrait of Nevada Seniors” study online at [surveys.unlv.edu](http://surveys.unlv.edu).

## Kitchen addiction

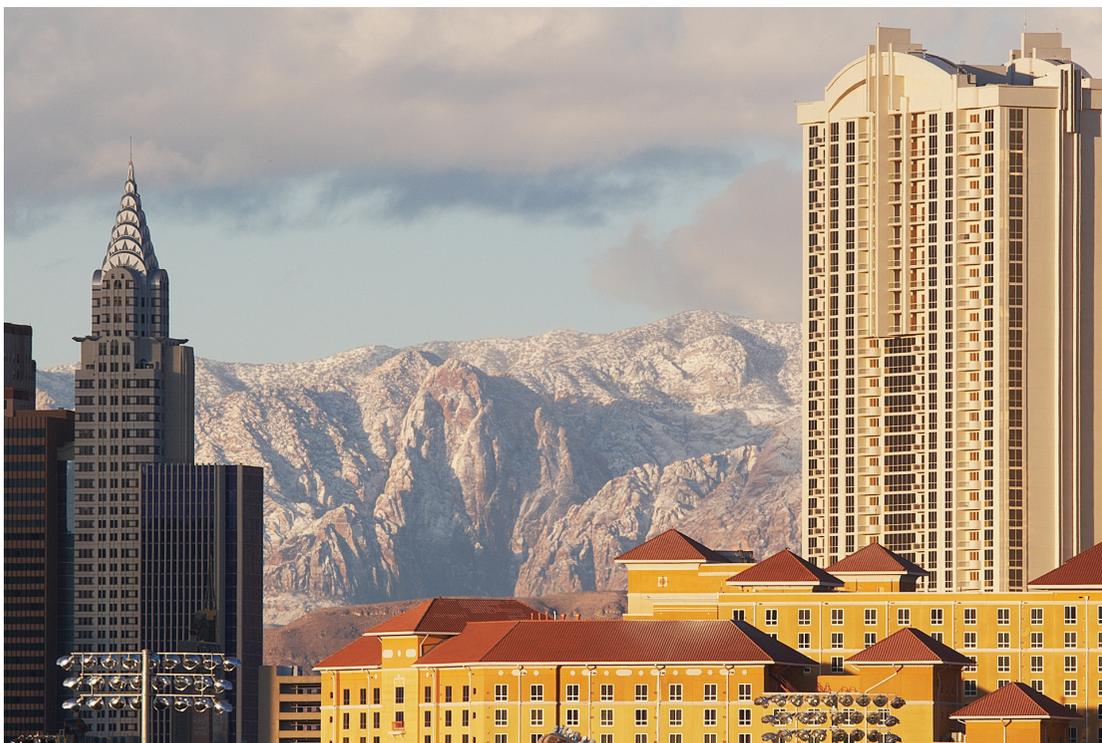
The Internet and secure online payment systems have transformed the gambling experience from trips to the casino and card games in the basement into everyday events, arranged in as much time as it takes to turn on your computer. But that easy accessibility poses problems for individuals prone to addictive behaviors. “The integration of online gambling in the home can more easily turn gambling behavior into a component of a consumer’s everyday life, like watching television,” says hotel administration professor Kathryn LaTour. “When online gambling becomes a routine daily behavior, it is easier for consumers to engage in mindless consumption of that activity, ultimately resulting in addiction and resultant financial losses.”

LaTour and colleague June Cotte of the University of Western Ontario, interviewed both casino and online gamblers to learn how gambling feels and is perceived by the consumer. The results of their study, “Blackjack in the Kitchen: Understanding Online Versus Casino Gambling,” was published in the February issue of the prestigious *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Their analysis included strategies to reduce online problem gambling. One solution, LaTour says, is to allow legitimate corporate sponsors of gambling, like those running major casinos in the U.S. and the government sponsors in Canada, to enter a newly regulated market for online gambling. The study also suggests the better use of age checks when signing up for an online account; cross-checking new users with lists of pathological gamblers; sending instant messages about problem gambling treatment; having a gambling counselor available online; and mandatory “cooling-off periods,” which force online players to wait for a set amount of time before they can wager money from their accounts.

—GIAN GALASSI





# Let it snow

More rainfall in the Colorado River Basin means less water downstream

More rain seems like it would increase water flow in our region's rivers, but not when it is coupled with less snow. Researchers found that increased temperatures in the Colorado River Basin have lowered the basin's streamflow — further evidence that climate change is impacting water resources.

Using historical temperature, precipitation, and natural runoff data, researchers identified a consistent increase in temperatures in the basin, increased river flows in the late fall and winter months, and decreased river flows during the peak runoff season (April through July).

The study does not explicitly compare snowpack and streamflow trends. Researchers believe, however, that rising temperatures have resulted in

Researchers believe, however, that rising temperatures have resulted in increased rain frequency and earlier snowmelt.

The Colorado River's water flow is important to water resource managers, who need accurate forecasts to plan system operations. Runoff from snowmelt in the high mountains in the upper part of the basin is the primary water source for the Colorado River.

"When rain occurs in place of snow, streamflow peaks earlier in the year and can make it challenging for water managers to assess resource availability," said Tom Piechota, UNLV director of sustainability and multidisciplinary research and professor in civil and environmental engineering.

increased rain frequency and earlier snowmelt.

The Colorado River Basin includes portions of seven states — Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, California, Nevada, and Arizona.

The study appeared in the October issue of *Journal of Hydrometeorology*. Piechota conducted the study with W. Paul Miller, a graduate student and hydrologic engineer student trainee with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Boulder City. Funding came from the Bureau of Reclamation, National Science Foundation, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

—GIAN GALASSI

## SAY AGAIN?

What do those big, technical words mean in the titles of recent studies?

We asked some professors to translate for us.

### Yet another reason to eat right

*"Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma Proliferative Phenotype is Modulated by Proanthocyanidins"*

Dental medicine professor Karl Kingsley suspects that natural extracts found in fruits and veggies can stop the progression of mouth cancer, which has a low survival rate. Kingsley and fellow researchers at the dental school believe the extracts can be used as a nontoxic alternative medicine. They call for the next step in biomedical research: testing in animals and humans.

### Sun+Water = Energy

*"A Photoelectrochemical Model of Proton Exchange Water Electrolysis for Hydrogen Production"*

Hydrogen offers the possibility of a clean energy, but researchers haven't yet developed cost-conscious, durable technology to produce it. UNLV mechanical engineering researchers are examining a new method using a membrane sandwiched between two pieces of coated glass. Water flows through the membrane, sun shines on the glass, and hydrogen comes out.

There's nothing you can tell Erin Breen about teens and their reckless driving habits that will surprise her. She runs grant-funded outreach programs to address traffic safety issues and analyzes data for state policy-makers through UNLV's Transportation Research Center. Much of her work focuses on teenagers — those risk-taking newbie drivers too often involved in crashes. Last summer, the personal tragedies behind the statistics were brought home to her in a way she never imagined.

# A DRIVING FORCE

**Erin Breen, coordinator of Nevada Traffic Safety Coalition**

**June 29:** A neighbor banged on our door that morning. The minute I realized who my husband was talking to, I knew it was about the kids. Our daughter, Hayley, (who was 18) was with their daughter in Southern California. There had been a car crash.

**What Happened:** They broke every rule we ever talked to them about — like getting sleep before you drive. Hayley was asleep in the backseat when the car flew off the freeway at about 70 miles per hour. I thank God a thousand times a day the driver (another teenager) somehow didn't roll the car. Hayley had a shattered jaw, two broken bones in her foot, and a messed up back, but she's alive.

**When I Saw Her:** At the hospital in California, she was heavily sedated. The first thing she said was, "Mom, I was trying to get comfortable in the backseat to sleep and I took my seatbelt off." I was just so glad she was alive and I told her so. I figured we could talk about the seatbelt later, and, believe me, we did.

**Cautionary Tale:** (For the past few years Breen has arranged speaking events with

*Sean Larimer. Now a college student, Larimer was 16 when he drank at a party and then got behind the wheel. He lost control of the car and slammed into a block wall, killing three of his best friends.)* Sean is a terrific young man who made terrible mistakes that will be with him the rest of his life. But good has come out of that tragedy. He definitely has saved lives through his speaking to teenagers. I could talk until I was blue in the face and not have nearly the same impact. They relate to Sean.

**No Goody Two-Shoes:** I never made any bones about the fact that I was that kid. I was a good partyer in my Bishop Gorman days. I drank my share of Strawberry Hill. People say to me, "Do you feel hypocritical?" I'm smarter than I was then. God willing, we'll get these teenagers to the point where they will be smarter as adults, too.

**A Parent's Role:** What was unusual in Sean's case is that he has an incredible mother who is a complete rock. Susan did something that not a lot of parents do. She said to him, "You did this and you are going to take responsibility." And he never flinched about doing that.

**Follow Up:** If your child is involved in something terrible, something life-altering, pay attention. You may not think that your child needs professional help, but do yourself a big, huge favor and have your child go and talk with a counselor. These things can be too hard for a child to handle alone.

**Personal Responsibility:** Nevada law says a driver is responsible for making all minor passengers wear seatbelts. Personally, I don't think all responsibility should rest with the driver. My contention is: If you are old enough to be out on a Friday night at 11:30 in a car full of your friends, you are old enough to take the responsibility to put your own seatbelt on.

**Past Successes:** (Breen and Susan Larimer were among those who lobbied for years for Nevada's graduated driving law, which places a number of restrictions on new teen drivers. One key element prohibits teen drivers from having anyone other than family members in the car for the first six months they have their licenses.) Nevada's graduated driving law immediately began saving lives. The number of driving deaths among 15- and 16-year-olds in

Nevada dropped from 21 one year to five the next year after the change.

**Current Challenges:** We are trying to get a law passed that would let law enforcement officers stop and ticket people for not wearing seatbelts. Right now they can ticket people for that only if they already are stopping the car for another violation.

**A Little Irony:** They can stop you if your taillight is out. They can stop you if you have an air freshener hanging from your rearview mirror. Those things are against the law. Ever hear of anybody dying from those things?

**Lobbying Takes Tenacity:** Passing laws that save lives is hard because of the idea some people have that placing limits on personal choices is inherently a bad thing. Libertarians don't like me.

**Bottom Line:** I'm really not trying to step on your Constitutional rights. I'm just trying to make sure you get home at night to your family. And if I do step on your rights in the process, I really don't apologize for it at all.



**“They can stop you if your taillight is out. They can stop you if you have an air freshener hanging from your rearview mirror. Those things are against the law. Ever hear of anybody dying from those things?”**

[PIXELS]





## We're still talking about it

A rare winter storm swept through Southern Nevada on Dec. 17, dumping the most snow on the valley in nearly three decades. Most UNLV students, out for winter break, missed the late afternoon event but faculty and staff enjoyed the novel experience of leaving footprints across campus. For more snow-covered campus images, visit the gallery at [magazine.unlv.edu](http://magazine.unlv.edu). [Photo by R. Marsh Starks]



# THE YOUNG

STATE BUDGET CRISIS RALLIES STUDEN



# UNIVERSITY & THE RESTLESS

STUDENTS PRIMED FOR INTERACTION. BY PHIL HAGEN >>



The new Student Union is a comfortable place for conversation between classes.

## “UNLV has become a place where people do more than drive up, take a class, and leave. We’ve made these places where people gather and stay.”

**H**alf an hour before the now-famous Budget Rally was set to begin, Adam Cronis was rightly concerned. The petition booths were manned along the Academic Mall, the stage was all set, and the DJ was ready to rock. But there were only about 200 people. This isn’t going to work, the student body president thought as he left the scene to tie up a loose end. Two hundred people do not make a rally.

But what did he expect? This was UNLV, the “commuter college.” Maybe even the unthinkable prospect of cutting the university budget in half could not unite its students.

But when Cronis returned that night, there was a new dawn on campus. At least 2,500 students — many holding signs and chanting protests — had filled the mall and spilled into spaces between buildings. Some stood atop Wright Hall.

“I was surprised,” the fifth-year senior recalls. “We all were. I don’t think anyone expected that.”

The next day, both local newspapers noted that the rally, with its dramatic turnout and 1960s-style spirit, marked the end of a UNLV problem that’s been around a lot longer than budget cuts: apathy.

“Crisis,” Cronis concludes with a smile, “is a good catalyst.”

But sociology professor Robert Futrell, who has been on campus for 10 years, believes that the rally had an impetus deeper than an axing of the UNLV budget. Like the civil rights protests of the 1960s that he and his students had been studying that winter, UNLV’s burst of civic activism was built on something stronger than spontaneity.

But what? Futrell’s theory is that the campus community has changed, and the reason has to do with changes to the campus itself.

“UNLV has become a place where people do more than drive up, take a class, and leave,”

he says. “We’ve made these places where people gather and stay.”

Gathering and staying leads to “interaction and talk among people of various networks,” Futrell says. “And when you get people gathering and talking and being with one another, you create a sense of community, of identity, of solidarity. And then when issues come up ...”

Mutually unbeneficial issues such as ... oh, let’s see ... teachers getting laid off, class sections being cut, and tuition doubling. Issues that lead to action. But not individual action or even group action — network action. “That’s when you get civic activism, a collective participation for a cause,” Futrell says. “That’s when you get 2,000 people instead of 200.”

**W**hen Futrell came to UNLV in 1999, a rally of 200 would have been more like it. Having come from the University of Kansas — the epicenter of the entire town of Lawrence — he was taken aback by the lack of community here. College campuses are known as being the “seedbed of civic activism,” he says, “but UNLV — I say this mostly anecdotally

but also reflecting on what colleagues who have been here a while talk about — has not had that.”

With about 6 percent of students actually living on campus (at the average university, it's around 20 percent), creating community has been an uphill climb at UNLV. Rebel spirit has more or less hinged on the success of the basketball team each year. And it didn't help that, for most of its 52-year existence, the 332-acre campus has been “very suburban looking,” as David Frommer, executive director of planning and construction, puts it. “It was sort of an enclave behind a wall of buildings.”

Then came a series of improvements that Futrell says were designed “to create campus community.” That transformation's first step was in 2001 with the Lied Library, which Frommer calls UNLV's first “landmark building,” a sleek, contemporary, high-tech building that provided many needed modern services and encouraged gathering in spots such as the Book 'n Bean café.

But the wave of momentum seems to have crested in the past few years, with the big splash being the 2007 openings of the Student Union and the Student Recreation and Wellness Center.

These improvements, Frommer says, came from the Campus Physical Master Plan, whose long list of goals for navigating UNLV into the future included increasing the vibrancy of campus life, “both in the new buildings themselves and the network of campus spaces and buildings that they work with.” And while he has no numbers to measure either kind of success, he agrees with Futrell that the changes have had a “significant impact” on the campus community.

A licensed architect, Frommer knows something about why. He points to the appealing “sharp, clean look” of the Student Union and its mall-like food court, the brand-name hangouts such as Starbucks, the game room, the myriad meeting and office spaces above, and the multiple gathering spaces inside and out, including a casual little amphitheater right outside the door. Over at the rec and wellness center, he shows off the bustling, state-of-the-art amenities: the cardio room, sport courts, pool, jogging track, juice bar...

“When you go to a major university, this is more what you'd see,” Frommer says. “And it's far superior to most of the athletic clubs around town, which helps keep students on campus.”

The facility's statistics certainly show a positive trend in usage. The rec center has averaged about 5,000 users a day, and the numbers have “steadily increased over the past year and a half since opening,” says Yvette Kell, the center's director, who has been at UNLV for six years.

And the new facility made room for the student health clinic, counseling center, and health promotion department, so the building acts as the hub for wellness activities. In its first year in the new facility, the clinic saw a 27 percent increase in patient visits, a 75 percent increase in immunizations, and a 5 percent increase in counseling services.

The Student Union also has seen “steady increases over the past couple of years for both visitors and events,” says Kelsey Harmon Finn, director of Student Union and Event Services. The facility's guest count was 1.3 million in 2007-08, and this school year it's on pace to exceed 2 million. Event hours were 43,700 the first year and are expected to approach 60,000 by the end of its second.

Photos: opposite, Aaron Mayes; previous page, R. Marsh Starks

No records are kept for campus usage overall, but Finn agrees with Futrell's assessment about there being more students on campus, and that they're staying for longer periods of time. “I feel like there's more people here in the morning,” she says, “and I see more in the evening, too.”

While UNLV will continue to be somewhat of a “commuter campus,” at least now “there is campus life,” Futrell says, “and that's the difference. People are staying to go to art openings, to eat dinner, to study in the library, to attend movies ... There are a lot of campus activities to keep people tied to a place and space, and this keeps them interactive.”

A particular type of interactivity that Cronis likes to talk about is “interfacing.” As in his group — the Consolidated Students of the University of Nevada (CSUN) — interfacing with other groups on campus. This, at the very least, is happening with greater frequency, he says. “Sometimes we're now meeting on a monthly basis, sharing our goals and trying to see Rebel spirit heightened.”

He also has proof of its effectiveness — namely that a lot more students are staying on campus after class for events, such as CSUN's speaker series, which regularly draws 200, and the university's Rebels After Dark program, which has attracted crowds of up to 600.

These, he says, are signs of “a more engaged and enthusiastic community.”

**W**hile the students are successfully interacting and interfacing, there are even newer improvements to factor in to the campus' fast-changing sociological equation.

Anchoring the southeastern end of campus is Greenspun Hall, UNLV's newest piece of big architecture. In the courtyard beneath the giant steel canopy that shades the handsome building, Frommer points out how this space was designed for formal and informal gatherings, and that with its close proximity to the student union amphitheater, there is now “a network of two big gathering spaces.”

The most dramatic contribution of Greenspun Hall to the new campus dynamic, however, might be the four capital letters deeply etched in the brick tower that rises high enough that Frommer can see it a mile away as he drives to work: “UNLV.”

An obvious pronouncement, sure, yet one that the university had been lacking. The only spirited competition is the rebellious red sign that wraps around the northeast corner of the student union, and that, of course, is barely two years old.

If those embellishments, combined with the growing collection of 21<sup>st</sup>-century architecture, don't completely eradicate the old suburban enclave look, this might: What's under construction where Frazier Hall once stood is another major public space. It will feature the Pioneer Wall (with bronzes of UNLV legends) and a park-like atmosphere, to be completed in phases. But unlike the points of entrance the campus has now, this spot — front and center along Maryland Parkway — will serve as UNLV's front door. It will show people the way in while giving them a glimpse into the campus life.

Because, it's important to know, there is some. And it's vital — especially in the dark days of budget shortfalls — that this maturing campus flaunts it.

Like Finn says of the new aesthetic: “Hey, we're UNLV, we're here, we're a part of the community, and we're not going away.” **U**

# EXTREME MAKEOVER:



→ ***This is where the world's superpower studies its enemies?***

The 15 students from the School of Architecture couldn't believe their eyes. At first they couldn't even find the front door

of the vital Nellis Air Force Base structure known as the Threat Training Facility (TTF).

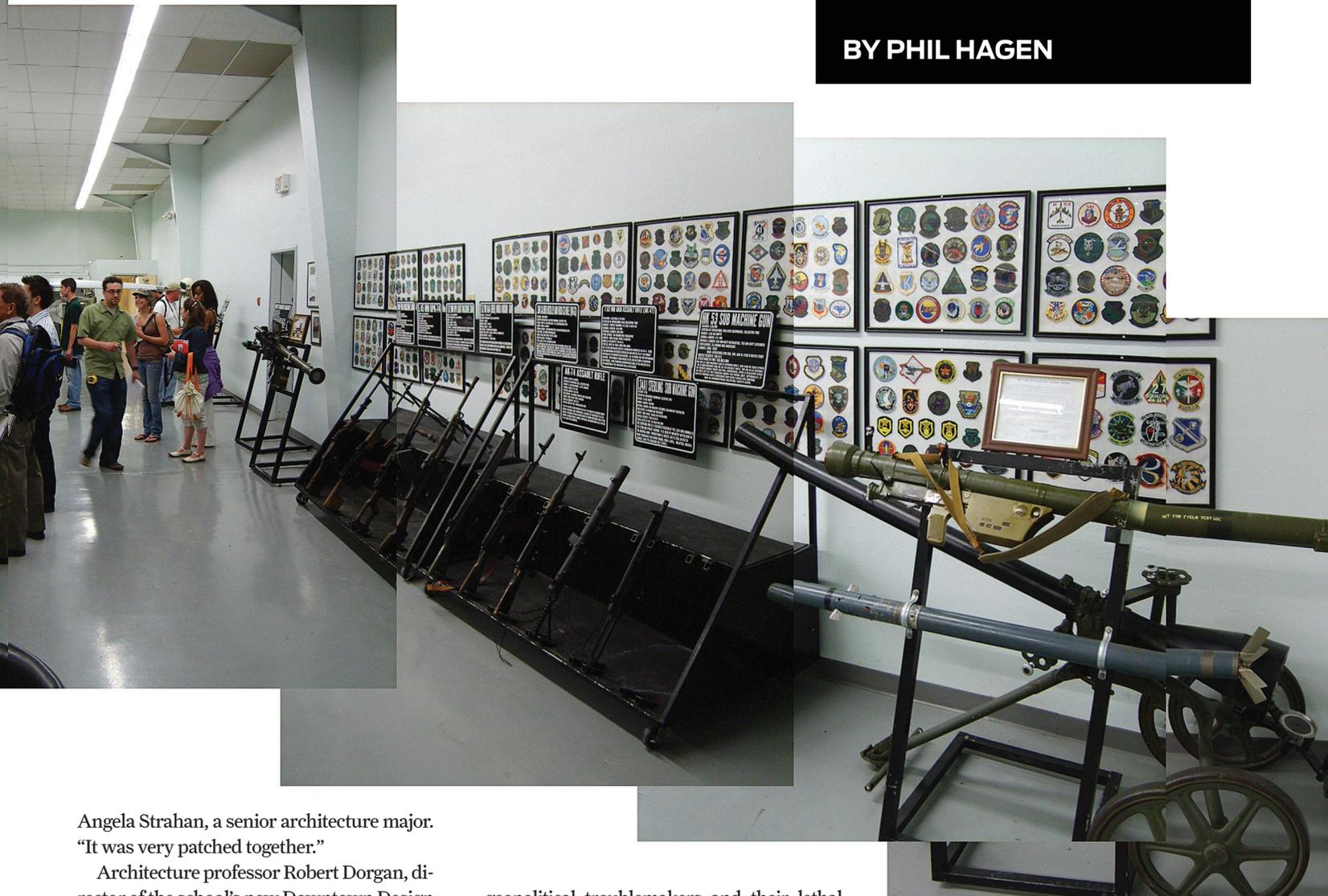
Inside the old repurposed hangars and out in the yard, they witnessed a disjointed array of captured weaponry that make up what the military calls "The Petting Zoo" — a missile launcher here, a stash of assault rifles there, a tank over by the dumpster. And the prizes of the collection, a pair of Russian MIG fighters, looked very much out of their element, perched under the fluorescent lights of a drop ceiling that was so low that the old warbirds' tires had to be deflated.

"There was nothing that sort of gave you the gravitas for what the facility was supposed to be," says

Architecture School's think tank  
overhauls military threat  
training facility

# HANGAR EDITION

BY PHIL HAGEN



Angela Strahan, a senior architecture major.  
“It was very patched together.”

Architecture professor Robert Dorgan, director of the school's new Downtown Design Center, puts it more bluntly: “Their mission is deadly serious, but instead of looking serious, it looked more like a dentist's office.”

Yet the Air Force has been using the facility like that for 30 years. Run by the 547th Intelligence Squadron, whose motto is “Our Adversaries Have No Secrets,” the TTF is where

geopolitical troublemakers and their lethal tools are studied. When there's a threat to America, this is where enemy tactics get replicated and analyzed. This crucial, sometimes life-and-death, knowledge is passed along through hands-on training for airmen, conferences between military branches, and special demonstrations and tours. About 30,000 visitors — from the FBI to the president —

pass through the TTF each year.

Lt. Col. Matteo Martemucci, the 547's director of operations, winced a little himself when

# EXTREME MAKEOVER:



he first stepped foot in the facility nearly two years ago. “The TTF has been very much a self-help project over the years,” he says. “It reeks of a 1970s-era museum instead of a 21st-century interactive training facility.”

But, fortunately for the cause, the lieutenant colonel is son of a Penn State architecture professor, and after growing up around lecture halls and design theories, he knew how much more effective his facility could be with “better organization” and a more “logical flow.” From Dad, he also knew there was a potential budget-friendly route to the solutions: Call up the local university.

**For a decade, Jeffrey Koep**, dean of the College of Fine Arts, had been dreaming of this moment — having a design center in the School of Architecture that was able to perform community outreach. He studied models around the country, trying to formulate the vision and tailor it to the needs of Southern Nevada and UNLV’s students.

It developed out of this observation: “Las Vegas has been a city that’s grown so rapidly that at times we’ve lacked plans to deal with the growth,” Koep says. As planning can be expensive, he thought, a nonprofit design center would be an appealing way to fill that void. He describes it as “a think tank, a brain trust of students, grad students, faculty, and practitioners from a variety of areas — not limited to just people in architecture — to provide informed planning for everything from a building to how you lay out city blocks.”

And downtown seemed the natural place to be. “We thought the School of Architecture should have some sort of footprint there,” Koep says. “We should be down where things are moving and shaking ... and not just be confined to campus, looking out the window.”

The fate of UNLV’s Downtown Design Center was virtually sealed when the city decided to renovate the Fifth Street School, a 70-year-old facility in the heart of downtown. Several years ago, it had housed the first incarnation of Koep’s idea, a design

Under the direction of architecture professor Robert Dorgan, the Downtown Design Center studios place students alongside public and private developers.

studio that offered theoretical architecture studies. Today’s Downtown Design Center has expanded beyond a cool classroom setting into a unique urban lab; it’s an objective, idea-generating player alongside public and private redevelopment efforts.

“It’s exactly where we wanted to be,” Koep says. “We really wanted to make it a vibrant center for all kinds of design, not just architecture, and Robert gets that.”

Dorgan gets that because he was involved in a few of the design-center models that Koep studied, and the 45-year-old Midwesterner (he earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in architecture from the University of Minnesota) was familiar with the needs here, having done two visiting professorships at UNLV (2000 and 2005) prior to accepting Koep’s job offer. He also has a handy

**The students “are squarely in the realm of fiction for the most part,” Dorgan says, “and you want them to rub up against the real world as much as possible.”**

# HANGAR EDITION



Lt. Col. Matteo Martemucci wanted to persuade Nellis Air Force Base leaders to fund a redesign of its premier weapons training center. A team of architecture students, including Angela Strahan, delivered both concepts and bragging rights for the base's facilities team.

airmen and those from other branches of the military. The challenges ranged from auditorium tedium (bright lights, hard metal chairs) to reorganizing the TTF's collections in a logical but also effective manner.

Whenever a student had an idea during the summer-long design process, he or she stopped by the studio to work it out and then pin an image of their vision on the wall. This kept the dialogue going beyond class time, and eventually two walls were covered with hundreds of inspired solutions great and small.

"They came to us needing a couple of ideas, and we ended up taking over the whole facility," Dorgan says. "They didn't need another Band-Aid; they needed surgery."

As the airmen stopped by the studio to review the progress, they'd see renderings and sketches that included new ways to display their MIGs (turning the hangar back into a hangar and adding a skylight), training rooms that were reorganized and energized (such as the "Cold War Room," with its NATO-style table and Soviet propaganda posters), and a few dramatic new options for the TTF entrance.

"One proposal we gave them was to get a control tower from another base and reinstall it as an entryway," Dorgan recalls. "And they were like, 'OK, whatever.' Then we said they could use it to climb up and watch planes take off. They said, 'We see them take off all the time.' Then we said, 'But you could look down and observe how all your equipment looks from above.' And they said, 'We need a tower.'"

Strahan's favorite idea is the Geopolitical Room, a centralized, atrium-like space dramatically designed in the spirit of global conflict — enemy flags hanging from a mezzanine, a world map covering the floor, and a giant George Washington quote about war preparedness etched on a wall. This new "heart and soul of the facility" offers much-needed

range of talents, such as software and commercial design (he helped design the Coca-Cola sign in Times Square). He has a love of urban planning (he invented a toy city that consists of wooden lots — "Dorgan Blocks" — and is now in development). And, as a teacher, he's an advocate of getting design students involved in actual processes as a counterbalance to their theoretical studies, as well as to help "create a more livable city."

"(Students) are squarely in the realm of fiction for the most part," Dorgan says, "and you want them to rub up against the real world as much as possible."

## The TTF was not only a real job,

it was a renovation of an existing structure. Most real architecture work is — as opposed to dreaming up Gehry-style edifices from scratch. The mission involved determining the clients' goals and internalizing them enough to understand how to best redesign the space. And as it turned out, these particular clients were more than "trained killing machines," as Dorgan puts it; they imparted some pretty good lessons in design themselves.

"They were well-versed in the relationship between the design of the space and its effect as an educational environment," Dorgan

says. "They were aware of the areas in which they were falling short — especially the lieutenant colonel, who was definitely fluent in architecture. You don't think of a guy from the Air Force talking about 'aesthetic shortcomings.'"

Getting familiar with the 547th Intelligence Squadron's world wasn't easy, though. The Design Center's undergraduate and graduate students made several trips to the base to do research, study the collections, conduct interviews, take measurements, and snap photos. Then, back in the classroom, they discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the facility, trying to figure out how the TTF could better express and perform its mission.

"The consensus we came up with was to give it an industrial feel, that we should turn it back into a military facility," Dorgan says. This approach would better speak to the building's function while making it more functional, because, for example, "Odds are that you'll never come across an Iraqi tank under fluorescent lights."

The students also sought to turn the facility's static environment into an interactive one — kind of like a children's museum, but for deadly weapons — as public tours are part of the TTF's mission. The big target, though, was improving the facility's ability to educate

# EXTREME MAKEOVER:

orientation in two ways. “When you walk into the Geopolitical Room, you understand what’s going on [at the TTF],” Strahan says. “And everything branches off it, so it helps you navigate the rest of the facility.”

The ideas were narrowed down and smartly packaged into a portfolio, which, thanks in part to overtime graphic-design efforts by Strahan, was delivered to Martemucci in November. He also was given the display boards, which became part of every TTF tour and special event — to be seen by “people who can potentially influence funding decisions.”

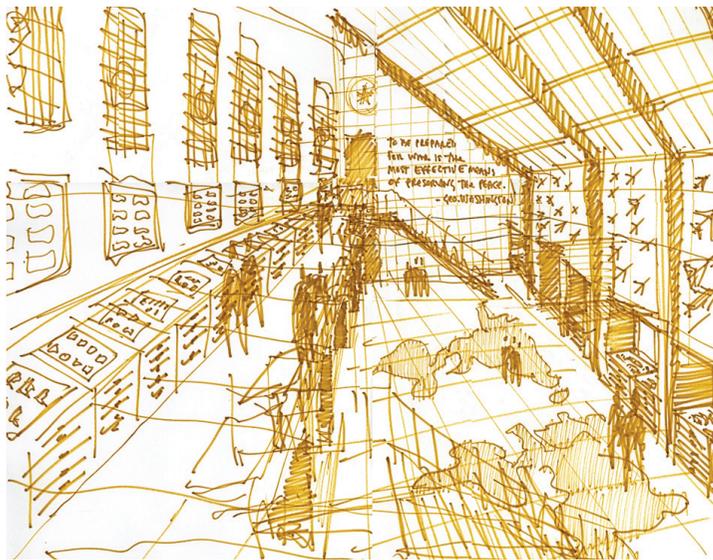
It worked. After key members of the Base Facilities Board saw the proposal, the TTF vaulted from No. 145 on Nellis’ projects list to No. 37. Since the top 90 projects receive funding, the UNLV plan will be put out to bid by the base’s civil engineers. Which elements will be incorporated hasn’t been decided, but Martemucci says they will comprise a “significant” portion of the portfolio.

“I was looking for someone to give us some thoughts and ideas,” he says of the center’s work, “but to have 15 separate minds working on this and researching it to the level that they did ...”

In addition, the project’s given Nellis some bragging rights. This spring, it was one of two bases competing in the finals for the USAF Chief of Staff’s Installation Excellence Award. “The winner has the honor of being known as the best base in the entire Air Force from an installation and facilities perspective,” Martemucci says. “The TTF was featured prominently in the presentation, and ... its redesign initiative will have played a big role in swaying the judges’ decision.”

**This first project may not have had Downtown Design Center students solving downtown’s problems** and rubbing elbows with urban planners, but it turned out to be a great building block for the program. “Sometimes projects come through the door in an unexpected way,” Dorgan says. “I’m happy that we were nimble enough and flexible enough to handle the Air Force’s needs.”

Coincidentally, the project’s museum-style interior design experience might come in



(Opposite) Nellis Air Force Base’s Threat Training Facility is one of the Air Force’s premier weapons analysis centers, but you wouldn’t know it from the way its arsenal is currently displayed.

(This page) Concepts for the central atrium reflect the seriousness of the facility’s mission while improving a visitor’s ability to view the displays.

handy again soon: Back on campus, the Marjorie Barrick Museum is in line for a major makeover, and Dorgan was recently named to its board.

Meantime, Koep plans to establish an advisory board “to put down guidelines to what projects we will accept,” and once the Downtown Design Center gets a foothold in the redevelopment process and the economy begins to recover, many of those projects are bound to be downtown. One thing is for sure, the program will keep the classroom and real world in a healthy balance. Some university design centers have become almost profit-driven. UNLV’s version will strive to be a “self-sustaining” (possibly charging fees to cover expenses) but not-for-profit com-

munity resource that uses education as its guiding light.

“We don’t want to be so tied economically to having to have projects that we can’t do what a university does,” Koep says. “We should be able to take some chances to think out of the box. On the other hand, we want to have realistic projects — projects such as Nellis — to be part of what our students are working on.”

This new balance already has made a difference for at least one student.

“I had no idea I’d be doing something like this,” Strahan says. “Through the course of working on Nellis and the semester working downtown, it’s resonated with me that architecture is what I want to do with my life. I feel like we had a real impact.” **U**

# HANGAR EDITION





# The Mike Masterson Chronicles: Rise of the Verminator

## Zest for pest control puts alumnus in front of Discovery Channel's cameras

BY GREG LACOUR

**T**uesday's problem was fruit bats. A colony of 200 or so had shacked up beneath an overhang on a run-down condominium building in Davie, Fla., near Fort Lauderdale. A girl walking her dog saw the bats fluttering out to feed at dusk. She sent an e-mail to the producers of a Discovery Channel show she'd seen about a pest-control company, the nasty critters they controlled, and the occasionally nasty measures they took to control them. So, in early February, video crew in tow, here came Mike Masterson and his Verminators.

They set up a system of nets, a kind of Bat Motel in reverse: Bats could fly out at twilight through funnels in the netting to feed but couldn't get back in at daybreak. The Verminators couldn't kill them; the bats are a protected species. That probably meant the bats would simply find another building to roost in. But the crew did what it could. Then they broke out shovels, scrapers, and plastic bags for the guano.

"Oh, yeah, tons of it. All over the place," Masterson says after taping had wrapped for the night. "And that stuff smells so bad."

Supervising the collection and disposal of mass quantities of bat poop is not the future Masterson, 48, imagined when he graduated from UNLV in 1984 with a degree in hotel management. (He thought he might have to hire the people who cleaned up the poop, should there be poop, which he didn't plan on, either.) He did security work during and immediately after college, escorting boxers into the ring area at Caesars Palace and, he says, working as a bodyguard for the likes of Joan Rivers and Olivia Newton-John. He thought about becoming a police officer. But nothing jelled, and for all his proximity to celebrity, he wasn't making much money.

A roommate worked in pest control, and Masterson tried it. For the first few weeks, he couldn't shake the feeling that the work was beneath him. But he got over it. He worked for Orkin for 18 years, branching out in 2004 to co-found his own pest control firm, Isotech Pest Management of Covina, Calif.

Isotech quickly amassed an impressive portfolio of corporate clients, including high-end hotels and restaurants. Then *Verminators*, jump-started by a 2007 front-page *Los Angeles Times*

story featuring Isotech, began airing last spring, following Masterson and Isotech workers from infestation to infestation. Soon, Masterson found himself with more work than he could imagine, not to mention a hectic travel schedule and his own sudden, unexpected celebrity.

"Everybody said that was gonna happen. I said, 'Nah, you're crazy.' But I have to tell you, it's insane," Masterson says. "I get stopped everywhere I go. I carry copies of the promo shot of me and the technicians to give away. It's really amazing, the amount of attention."

He sees the show and the attention it brings as a way to advance Isotech's business opportunities, not as a time-and-energy-sapping hindrance. And should Masterson's head ever begin to swell too much, his wife of 21 years, Roberta, would set him straight: "Hey, you think you're hot stuff?" he says, adopting Roberta's voice. 'Go clean the toilet.'

**M**asterson's voice still carries the nasal inflection of his native Chicago, where his father, John, served for more than a decade as arts and sciences dean at DePaul University.

During high school, Masterson worked at hotels, starting out as a waiter and moving up to a night auditor position by the time he began attending DePaul. He eventually earned an associate's degree in architectural design from a local junior college but decided he couldn't spend day after day sitting behind a desk. He wanted to work in hotels. In 1982, Masterson transferred to UNLV, home to one of the nation's top hotel management programs. "Broke my mother's heart," he says.

But then he drifted into the security gigs and eventually into pest control. Once he shed his sense of slumming, he says, he gained an appreciation for how important the work really was.

"Without pest management, people would still be dying of viruses and plagues that are still rampant in third-world countries," he says. "When you start learning about something you don't know ... I couldn't read enough books, I couldn't attend enough seminars, I just wanted to know more and more and more."

The enthusiasm carries over into the show, which is beginning its second season. In one of the first episodes, Masterson accompanies a technician to Camino Nuevo Charter Academy, a small school near downtown Los Angeles.

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## 1970s

**Patsy Neely**, '72 BS Education, is a consultant for Regarding Learning New Mexico, an educational organization. She has two children and four grandchildren. Her hobbies include writing, art, photography, travel, dance, and hiking. She lives in Ruidoso.

**Paul Carpino**, '74 BS Hotel Administration, is a UNLV career counselor and the author of *Now, Launch Your Career*, a book of advice letters from leaders such as Donald Trump, Manolo Blahnik, Mario Batali, and Danny Gans.

**Ken Fong**, '78 BS Business Administration, joined the board of directors of Nevada Pacific Bank, one of only two new banks approved by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. during 2008. He is a general partner and manager of Fong and Associates, which owns and manages shopping centers and offices. He is active with the College of Business Alumni Association Board.



## 1980s

**Richard Schneider**, '83 BS Engineering, is executive vice president of product strategy for International Game Technology. He joined the company in 2003 and has served as president of IGT Systems and executive vice president of service-based gaming. Previously, he worked for Acres Gaming and United Coin Machine.

**Steve Sepersky**, '83 BS Business Administration, is the North American distribution sales manager for Silicon-Systems, an advanced storage technology company. He and his wife, Susan, have a daughter, Serena. He enjoys golf, baseball, and gardening. The family lives in La Quinta, Calif.

**Jacklyn Shaw**, '83, Master of Education, taught business training at Afghanistan's Kabul University for two years in its core and gifted programs. She markets a number of items, including her Afghan Time board game, through her website, *dynamics.biz*. Her hobbies include choir and dance exercise. She lives in Seal Beach, Calif.

**Tammy Snoddy**, '83 BA Criminal Justice, is coordinator of public safety programs at Broward College Institute of Public Safety. Her hobbies include riding her bicycle and quilting. She lives in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

## BEDBUG BEDLAM

**Hotel professor helps businesses fight rising infestation of lawsuits**

Their name notwithstanding, bedbugs don't just settle down in your bed.

They infest nightstands, wall sockets, iPods, hard drives. They hide in wall space, lay eggs in classrooms. They set up colonies in churches and hospitals. They could be anywhere. And Americans are finding — and being nibbled by — more and more of them.

That's one of the main points hotel management professor Christian Hardigree stresses to jittery business owners who attend her session at seminars across the nation. Hardigree, '93 BA Hotel Administration, is a trial attorney by training and now also serves as UNLV's assistant president and chief of staff. She found herself in recent years having to bone up on bedbugs, a natural problem for hoteliers but one thought to have been largely solved through decades of advanced pest control.

Except it wasn't. This decade, the number of reported infestations in the United States has risen sharply — and with it, the number of related lawsuits.

In the seminars, Hardigree advises hoteliers to train their staffs on how to recognize infestations; to hire pest control companies to inspect regularly; and to have plans for immediately addressing customers' complaints. She reviews current litigation and specific contract language for pest control businesses. And she hauls out the creepy bug photos. Demand for her advice is growing: She co-hosted nine seminars in 2008. By January 2009, she had already booked 12 sessions through this summer.

"The key to this is educating the public," she says recently. "I think we're in for a rude awakening."

The combination of more infestations and publicity about related lawsuits have led to even more suits, Hardigree says. Hoteliers have to weigh the risk of money lost in judgments against the thousands of dollars they could lose by shutting

Camino Nuevo has a termite problem. "We're gonna find these guys, no matter how long it takes us," Masterson says. He climbs a ladder, removes some ceiling tiles above where he's found a few termites and discovers a large pile of you-know-what. "We've got a bunch of fecal matter," he calls down. "Oh, my gosh. This is bad." The technician gets to work.

That was in fall 2007. More than a year later, the termites haven't returned, says Jose Peralta, the school's facilities manager. An added benefit: The *Verminators* production company paid for the termite treatment. Camino Nuevo still uses Isotech to inspect the school every month.

"We felt like we were being informed and knew what they were going to do," Peralta says. "Some companies, they tell you what they're going to do, and you have no idea what they're talking about ... If I ever have a problem, I know I can call Mike, and he'll always call me back."

Masterson encounters similar, or worse, infestations during taping. The *Verminators* website has a mash reel of some of the more disgusting discoveries, set to the panicky strains of Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King." Many feature shocked homeowners. But Isotech visits houses or apartments only for the show. Otherwise, it concentrates on business clients.

"I started using Mike when he was with Orkin in the early '90s. When he went off on his own, it



As host of the *Verminators*, Mike Masterson (right) tears through roofs, walls, and floorboards to rid buildings of bugs, bats, and other natural invaders.

was a no-brainer to stay with him, because he's really great on service and follow-up," says Blair Salisbury, president of the California Restaurant Association's Los Angeles chapter. Salisbury's family owns the popular El Cholo chain of Mexican restaurants; he owns the El Cholo in Pasadena.

"A lot of companies, the people they send out don't really seem on top of their games, like they don't really want to be there," Salisbury says. "(Isotech's) technicians seem to take a lot of pride in their work, which is a reflection on Mike's pride in his work."

down blocks of rooms for days to rid them of the bugs.

The price of inaction can be high. In 2007, a New York opera singer sued Hilton Hotels for \$6 million after, she claims, she was bitten 150 times during a six-night stay in Phoenix. (She settled for an undisclosed amount.) In 2003, a brother and sister bitten multiple times at a Chicago Motel 6 were awarded \$372,000 in punitive damages. Universities have fielded complaints as well.

Entomologists believe the bedbug resurgence started in the early 1970s, when the U.S. banned most uses of the chemical DDT. Since the early 1990s, pest controllers battling roaches have tended to use bait pesticides instead of spray to limit potential health and environmental



hazards; unfortunately, the spray was more effective in controlling ancillary pests like bedbugs. As states pass laws that seek the use of “non-chemical and reduced risk” pesticides, the resurgence will continue.

The only solace is that severe reactions to bedbug bites are rare. Even though the insects carry 28 known pathogens, no known cases exist of bedbugs passing diseases to humans, as mosquitoes and ticks do.

Still, bedbugs do bite, and they feed on blood, potentially yours. The knowledge has changed Hardigree’s habits, especially given her frequent travel. “I know it sounds silly,” she says, “but I pack and unpack in the garage now.”

—GREG LACOUR

**W**hen Masterson and his friend Kevin Alden founded Isotech in June 2004, the company employed three people. It now has 50, serving 6,600 clients, most in California. The firm is expanding, even in the face of a snake’s-belly economy. “Our business is recession-proof,” Masterson notes.

The market for reality shows on pest control appears to be expanding, too. In February, A&E debuted its own answer to *Verminators*, titled — what else? — *The Exterminators*, a “docusoap” that chronicles the shenanigans of a heavy metal-haired Louisiana pest fighter and his wacky family.

“There are 28,000 pest control companies out there. I’ve never worried about competition,” says Masterson, who knows the Louisiana heavy-metal pest dude, Billy Bretherton. “I actually think his show will complement our show. Ours is more Jacques Cousteau meets Fear Factor ... his is more reality TV meets mad scientist. Ours is more educational, his is more entertainment.”

Show or no show, Masterson worries about a coming explosion of bedbug infestations, created by a combination of complacency, increased international travel, and an industrywide switch from chemical sprays to baits, which don’t kill as many insects.

In Isotech’s first full year, 2005, the company tackled about 120 bedbug-infested hotel rooms.

Last year, it handled about 18,000. “I will guarantee you,” Masterson says, “in the next five years, it’ll be the biggest plague in America.”

Isotech has assembled a team of bedbug-sniffing beagles certified by the National Entomology Scent Detection Canine Association. The company developed a system for heat-treating blocks of hotel rooms — sustained high heat being one of the few things that kills bedbugs en masse — to save hoteliers time and lost business from having to clear the rooms out for several days of fumigation.

The growing bedbug problem is not limited to flea-bag motels — luxury hotels have them too. That’s something else Masterson learned on the job, the one he once thought he was above. The day after the bat condo, the Isotech team was headed to the hip, upscale Miami neighborhood of Coconut Grove to combat an infestation of peacocks.

Peacocks?

“Hey, everything is neat when there’s a balance. But when you have 60 peacocks on the roof of your house, and they’re defecating on there, and their claws are scratching the finish of your Porsche, you’re not going to want those guys around,” Masterson says. “That’s one thing about pest control: They’re everywhere. It doesn’t matter whether you’re rich or poor. Pests don’t discriminate.”

## NOTES

### 1990s

**Jennifer Bonilla**, ’91 BS Hotel Administration, was named to the “Top 100 Under 50 Executives” list in 2008 by *Diversity MBA Magazine*. She is president of the West region of Pitney Bowes Management Services and has been with the company more than eight years. Previously, she spent 10 years with ARAMARK Corp. Her hobbies include Harley touring on her 2003 Road King and spending time with her dogs. Married with two daughters, she lives in Lisle, Ill.

**Paul Carron**, ’93 BA Communication Studies, is an Emmy-winning news producer for CBS News in Los Angeles where he has worked for 10 years. He previously worked for KVBC and KVVU in Las Vegas. He lives in Glendale.

**David Porter**, ’93 BS Hotel Administration, is general manager for the new, hip Starwood Aloft Portland Airport at Cascade Station in Oregon. Previously, he served as the director of sales for the Mark Spencer Hotel in Portland. In December he married Mary Pat at the Maui Sheraton in Hawaii. They live in Camas, Wash.



**Steven DiMascio**, ’94 BS Business Administration, is a senior accountant at Sullivan & Co. He works with manufacturing and distribution clients and is

responsible for diversified accounting and auditing assignments. He also participates in planning client engagements and preparing financial statements. He previously worked as a trader on the Boston Stock Exchange. He lives in Cranston, R.I.

**Angel De Fazio**, ’96 BS Athletic Training, is president of the National Encephalopathy Foundation. She interacts with people who have been injured by environmental toxicants and with activists trying to reduce people’s exposure to chemicals. She discovered an anticoagulant drug precursor in a fragrance and submitted a petition to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to have it removed from retail shelves, seized at customs, and reclassified as a drug. She currently is working with the Clark County School District to implement effective pest management alternatives.

**Hilary McClain**, ’94 BS Hotel Administration, is vice president of internal talent for MGM Mirage. She began work at the MGM Grand in the human resources department following graduation and returned to the company’s Primm Valley Casino Resort in 2002. In the interim, she worked for

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Station Casinos and Harrahs. She and her husband have four children.

**Linda Scheller**, '96 BA Psychology, is a human resources manager with Shift4 Corp., a developer of enterprise payment solutions in Summerlin. She is the proud mother of a 6-year-old son, Cole.

**Michael Dubé**, '96 BS Hotel Administration, is general manager at the Sheraton Denver Tech Center. He and his wife, Natalie, have two children, Ryan, 3, and Keira, 2.

**Jung Hoon Lee**, '97 MS Hotel Administration, is pursuing a doctoral degree in hospitality management at Kansas State University. Previously, he was a front office manager for a Hilton hotel in New Jersey; general manager of a Tony Roma's in Korea; and director of human resources and of international development for Sun@Food, which owns 60 restaurants. He lives in Manhattan, Kan.

**A. Michael Vermy**, '97 BA Romance Languages, is an adjunct professor of French and Spanish at Pepperdine University. He earned his Ph.D. in romance linguistics and literature from UCLA. He lives in Los Angeles.

**Dan E. Madsen**, '98 BA Criminal Justice, is an area scout for the Boston Red Sox. His hobbies include golfing and traveling. His wife, **Tara Warthen Madsen**, '96 Bachelor of Music, '99 Master of Music, is a part-time choral music teacher in Lake Elsinore, Calif. Her hobbies include sewing, traveling, and scrapbooking. The couple has two sons, Luke Russel, 2, and Cade James, 9 months. The family lives in Murrieta, Calif.

**Valerie Miller**, '98 BA Communication Studies, was recognized as Outstanding Journalist for a Weekly Newspaper by the Nevada Press Association for 2008. She also won a second-place award for Best Business Feature and an honorable mention for Best Investigative or In-Depth Story or Series. She is a reporter for the *Las Vegas Business Press*.



**Serena S. Mull**, '98 BS Biology, is a dentist working in a nonprofit clinic in McMinnville, Ore. A graduate of the School of Dentistry at Oregon Health & Science University, her hobbies include historical research, fitness, travel, photography, art, and swimming. She lives in Portland and says she loves the rain.

2000s

**Amy Canepa Donahue**, '00 BS Hotel Administration, is a portfolio manager for

# Serge McCabe

'77 BFA, Art-Photography

Serge McCabe is still true. He was our mystery man last fall — bearded, plaid-clad, and unidentified in a black-and-white photo found in the archives at Lied Library. The tattoo on his right bicep encircled “UNLV” in a heart; a banner waving below read “Be True to Your School.”

Turns out the tattoo was temporary; the picture was for a university marketing campaign around 1977. McCabe joined the staff as a student worker and continued for a few years after graduation as a graphic designer and photographer.

Today, he's a freelance photographer in Oregon and California. McCabe earned a master's degree in 1984 from California's Brooks Institute of Photography. He later worked for the Associated Press and newspapers in Santa Barbara, Calif.; St. Paul, Minn.; and Seattle. He became director of photography for the Portland *Oregonian* in 1990 and helped launch its magazine, *Homes and Gardens of the Northwest*, as chief photographer.

With a minor in secondary education, his original career plan, though, was teaching. But it seems his talent got in the way. “I did my student teaching, but then I kept getting hired as a photographer,” he says.

So, the classroom wasn't in the cards, but McCabe didn't lose his impulse to teach. Soon after he came to the *Oregonian*, he trailblazed the Minority Residency Program, on a mission to diversify first the photo staff, then the newsroom.

He was inspired by an African-American newsroom clerk who wanted to take photos, but just didn't have the know-how. McCabe began working with her one-on-one, early every morning. Eventually he proposed an on-the-job training program for minority journalists. He had to be persistent — newsroom editors resisted because the paper was in a hiring freeze, but eventually the publisher bit at the idea.

“I thought, ‘This is America. It's a society of many different faces. How can we report the news in a major town like Portland when all of the photographers are white?’ I don't mean that in a bad way, but if you're going to see the world, you need a lot of different eyes to be objective,” McCabe says.

As an immigrant, McCabe knows what it's like to be the outsider. He spent his early childhood in France, then came to California as a 7-year-old who didn't speak English. His classmates taunted him,

and McCabe resolved never to make others feel the way he did. He stayed true to that promise when he created the minority residency, through which the *Oregonian* went on to hire 11 full-time staffers.

“It gives you richness to have that diversity. It makes your life more full,” he says.

Diversity defines McCabe's own photography. He's shot just about anything you can imagine: hard news, fashion, food, gardens, sea life, even childbirth. One of his regular freelance clients is Portland International Raceway. “I can shoot pretty much anything from underwater to aerial. It's better for me mentally. I couldn't specialize in one thing and stay with that; it would drive me crazy.”

He left the *Oregonian* in 2004 to move to California with his wife, who had relocated a few years earlier for her work. They've since returned to Portland, but McCabe still has a foot in each state, both for work and to care for his ailing father in California.

Freelancing gives him the flexibility to go where he's needed. Like when he was assigned a story about Surgical Eye Expeditions International, which provides free eye surgery in developing countries. McCabe was so fascinated that he volunteered on expeditions to Mexico and Vietnam and served on the group's board. He also is involved with Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity, which provides vision care and glasses in poor countries.

“As a photographer,” he says, “I rely so much on my eyes that I really felt it was important to get involved.”

He can't seem to resist when someone asks for help. At the post office one recent day, a worker noticed the word “photography” on his package and asked to pick his brain. McCabe took a few moments to explain F-stops and shutter speeds to her. On home and garden shoots, inevitably homeowners would start to quiz him about his techniques and how to improve their own photography.

It seems teaching is part of McCabe's true nature after all.

— ERIN O'DONNELL

**Editor's Note:** Our thanks to reader Lynn Dryer for helping us identify McCabe from an archival photo. A former administrator and student recruiter, Dryer retired in 1993, after 25 years at UNLV.



Photojournalist Serge McCabe (along with his dog, Bijoux) is at work in a mustard field outside Santa Rosa, Calif. He's developing a coffee-table book on the Sonoma Valley.

Photo: Charlie Gesell

## NOTES

United Liquors in Boston. After 10 years in restaurants, she now works for a liquor distributor representing the Diageo and Moët-Hennessy High End Spirit portfolios. She married Mark Donahue in September.

**Kathryn Goetz**, '00 BA Communication Studies, is attending nursing school. Running is her hobby. She and her husband of one year live in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Christian Gonzalez**, '00 BS Hotel Administration, works at the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills. He joined Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts in 2001, spending five years at the resort in Punta Mita, Mexico, as sales manager and later transferring to California to do pre-opening sales for the Westlake Village hotel. He lives in Los Angeles.

**Ryan Waite**, '00 BS Education, received a master of science degree in history from Utah State University in 2007. He teaches government and history at Ogden High School in Ogden, Utah. He lives in Roy.

**Aaron Ward**, '00 BS Electrical Engineering, joined Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox, an intellectual property law firm in Washington, D.C. A graduate of the UCLA School of Law, he previously worked as a patent examiner at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and as a registered patent agent prosecuting domestic and international patent applications in electrical, computer, and mechanical engineering.

**Rebecca Farrah Kimbrough**, '01 BA Education, is working toward her doctoral degree in educational administration at the University of Minnesota. She earned a master of arts degree in educational leadership from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She lives in Eagan, Minn.

**Gina Madsen**, '01 BS Business Administration, '07 JD and MBA, opened her own law firm in Las Vegas. She practices corporate law, providing outsourced general counsel services to small businesses. She married her college sweetheart,

**Nick Madsen**, '02 BA Criminal Justice, in 2002. She says they have six "four-legged children."

**Brett Hughett**, '03 BS Hotel Administration, is property manager of Oakwood Worldwide's flagship property in Marina del Rey, Calif. The 597-unit multifamily property offers corporate housing and conventional apartments. He has been with the company four years, most recently managing Oakwood's property in San Jose.

**John L. Mendez**, '03 BS Business Administration, co-authored an article on entrepreneurial business with his MBA graduate school professors Charles Vance and David

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Choi of Loyola Marymount University and Kevin Groves of Pepperdine University. Titled "An Examination of the Nonlinear Thinking Style Stereotype of Successful Entrepreneurs," it was recently published in the *Journal of Enterprising Culture*.

**Kathleen Pearce**, '03 BS Secondary Education, teaches high school earth science and anatomy. While she enjoys sewing and skiing, she says her 1-year-old son is her biggest hobby. She lives in Evergreen, Colo.

**Shelly G. Klingensmith**, '04 BS Human Service Counseling, is a pastor for Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Stuttgart, Kan., a town of 36 people who have to drive 90 miles to Kearney, Neb., to reach the nearest Target. She was ordained a minister in Las Vegas in June after earning a master's degree in divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, in May.

**Jaime Wright**, '04 BS Hotel Administration, is the events manager for the Spokane Guilds' School & Neuromuscular Center, which treats infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities. She recently earned her MBA degree. She lives in Spokane Valley, Wash.

**Jason Michaels**, '05 MBA, is a board-certified dermatologist and medical director of Aspire Cosmetic MedCenter. His charity endeavors include Smiling Soles, which provides shoes and dental supplies to children who cannot afford them. He sits on the board of Sight for Life, a nonprofit organization serving patients who are unable to afford the vision treatment they need. His hobbies include biking and painting portraits.

**Megan Rice**, '05 BA Hotel Administration, is the housekeeping training manager at Wynn Las Vegas. After UNLV, she worked as a management trainee at Four Seasons Boston and was promoted to assistant manager at Four Seasons Miami.

**Tessa Riess**, '05 BA Communication Studies, is corporate marketing manager for Bridgepoint Education. She also handles public relations for the PAST Foundation, which is mapping the shipwreck Menemon Sanford. The paddle steamer sank near Key Largo in 1862. PAST is a national nonprofit organization that promotes partnerships between anthropologists and educators. Her hobbies include beach volleyball and volunteering. She lives in San Diego.

**PJ Perez**, '07 BA Journalism and Media Studies, manages websites for the Las Vegas Valley Water District, writes for a variety of publications, and runs a network of news and music blogs. As a freelance journalist, he has written for *Rolling Stone*,

REBELS IN OFFICE



# Robert Chesto

'73 BS Elementary Education,  
'75 M.Ed. Educational Administration

Few alumni can tout the recruiting record of Robert Chesto. The Rancho High School principal requires each of his graduating seniors — 565 this year — to fill out an application to UNLV.

Two years ago, Chesto contacted the Nevada System of Higher Education office about creating a university presence at Rancho. Soon, UNLV sent a few dozen brightly colored banners and then came a kiosk, stocked with application materials and periodically staffed by recruiters. "(The banners) are daily nonverbal reminders," he says. "Students look at the faces on the banners and they can say, 'They look like me.' The banners never get messed with, tagged, or marked. There's just a respect for them."

And the mandatory applications stave off procrastination, he says. "This way, they receive help and have the experience of filling out at least one college application."

As a 36-year educator, Chesto knows the importance of higher education and the advantages UNLV offers. "I wanted to create a mindset about UNLV," says the 1967 Rancho graduate. "Whether they go (to UNLV) or not is a family decision." But at least he knows they'll make a fully informed decision.

His efforts are paying off. "I wouldn't have applied," says Cedric Williams, a Rancho senior interested in dentistry. "Now, UNLV is at the top of my list."

Kristin Neubauer, a top-ranked senior, says aggressive recruitment sold her as well. "Programs here give us information about admissions and financial aid. There's a comfort in knowing you're already accepted."

—KARYN S. HOLLINGSWORTH

Rancho High Principal Robert Chesto has made applying to UNLV mandatory for his graduating seniors.



Last fall's elections placed a number of Rebels in office in the state and U.S. capitols. Longtime political science professor **Dina Titus** was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. She joins alumna **Shelley Berkley**, who started her political career as student government president.

U.S. Sen. **John Ensign** is an alum, too, having studied at UNLV as an undergraduate before transferring. The Nevada Legislature boasts a number of members who are alums or have worked on campus:

- Assemblymen **Kelvin Atkinson**, **Barbara Buckley** (Assem-

bly speaker), **Marcus Conklin**, **William Horne**, **Ruben Kihuen**, **Marilyn Dondero Loop**, **Kathy McClain**, **John Ocegüera**, **James Ohrenschall**, and **Lynn Stewart**

- Sens. **Bob Coffin**, **Warren Hardy II**, **Dennis Nolan**, **Mike Schneider**, and **Joyce Woodhouse**.

Also serving in the Nevada Assembly are retired mathematics professor and administrator **Paul Aizley** and former staff member **Ellen Koivisto**. And at least one lawmaker currently is studying here; Assemblyman **Morse Arberry Jr.** is working toward his MBA degree.



Photo: R. Marsh Starks

## NOTES

*Art + Living*, 944, *Six Degrees*, *CityLife*, and *Las Vegas Weekly*. He and his girlfriend have two Pekingese dogs.

**Margarita Vidal**, '07 BS Business Administration, '08 MS Accounting, is a staff auditor for Ernst & Young.

## DEATHS

**Chris "Flash" Richardson**, who played basketball for UNLV from 1998 to 2000, died in his sleep in Sasebo, Japan, in December. A fitness promotion major at UNLV, he played at the Thomas & Mack again last November, scoring 15 points during the Alumni/Legends game. At the time of his death, Richardson was participating in the Harlem Globetrotters' annual holiday tour of U.S. military bases in Asia. A resident of Las Vegas, he is survived by his mother and his children.

**Frederick Preston**, sociology professor, died March 30. A faculty member since 1973, he served as department chair twice and as graduate coordinator. His projects included studies of the homeless and of older gamblers in Las Vegas. In 1994 he was named outstanding faculty member for the College of Liberal Arts by UNLV's student government. His family has requested that any memorial donations be sent to the UNLV Foundation for the Dr. Frederick W. Preston Sociology Graduate Fellowship fund.

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## Thump, thump, knit one Thump, thump, drop two

As the Runnin' Rebels fire up the Thomas & Mack, Mary Wilmore's crochet hooks click. The special usher has downtime during the games, so she took up the hobby about 10 years ago. A player noticed and jokingly asked for a blanket. Now she makes afghans for all the graduating seniors (making sure to follow NCAA gift rules, of course). She usually sticks with the mile-a-minute pattern because it's fast and easy to adjust for the oversized players. NBA players in town for the summer league discovered her, too, and now Kobe Bryant and Nate Robinson have their own Wilmore blankets. "One day Dwight Howard [the Orlando Magic center] came looking for me, the person who just makes sure people know which way to go," she says. "My boys, they all give me respect. It's always 'Yes, ma'am' — even when I'm telling them they can't do something. When I was a kid growing up in Louisiana, I never dreamed I'd meet the people I've met and learn the things I've learned." She chokes up on that last bit and then stops to give directions to a visiting player. "What do you need, baby? Yes, honey, go right down and to the left. ... These boys, I love all of them the same." [Photo by Aaron Mayes]

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