



AMERICA'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY PUBLISHED NEWSPAPER

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After Years Of Renovations,
The Old Bond Hotel
Prepares To Open As A Hilton
With 116 Units For Extended Stays.

SUITE REPOSE

BY KENNETH R. GOSSELIN ■ COURANT STAFF WRITER

As he parked cars for three years in the lot behind the Bond Hotel in downtown Hartford, Moustafa Akl heard it all at least three times before: The building was about to reopen as a Hilton Homewood Suites. Each time, the opening was pushed back. Now, the management of the Asylum Street property insists that it will open as a 116-suite hotel on Nov. 8 after \$5 million in renovations that took four years to complete. The hotel, which would cater to extended-stay travelers, says it already has bookings into 2008. It held a job fair on Monday and just needs Hilton's final sign-off to open. Still, Akl was left to wonder Wednesday: "Is this the last word?" If it is, the opening of the hotel would end a tortured, seven-year saga to fully redevelop the historic, 12-story building, rivaling some of the longest-to-complete and troubled projects in the city's history. In 2005, city officials grew so frustrated with the slow progress on the building — the first proposal was for upscale apartments — that it pulled tax breaks granted when the property was acquired by the current owner in 2000.

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Highlights Of The Plan
What: Renovated 12-story, 116-suite extended-stay hotel.
Location: Former Bond Hotel, Asylum Street.
Opening: Set for Nov. 5.
Focus: Business travelers, people relocating.
Services: Full kitchens. High-speed Internet. No room service.
Price: \$199 and up per night, plus parking.

Privacy Laws Protect DeLuca

Panel Can't Get FBI Recordings Without Senator's Approval

By EDMUND H. MAHONY
COURANT STAFF WRITER

A legislative committee investigating convicted state Sen. Louis C. DeLuca was forced Wednesday into the awkward position of having to ask DeLuca for permission to review secret FBI recordings that lawmakers want in order to help them decide whether to recommend expelling or otherwise disciplining the senator. Committee members voted to direct the unusual request to DeLuca, R-Woodbury, the target of their inquiry, based on instructions from the U.S. attorney's office. Federal prosecutors, who have control of the recordings and other information developed during an investigation of the senator, said privacy laws prevent them from unilaterally releasing the materials. An undercover operative recorded the conversations with DeLuca as part of an FBI investigation in September 2006. The FBI was looking into DeLuca's relationship with garage company executive James Galante, a DeLuca campaign contributor who is under criminal indictment for using New York mob muscle to rig trash hauling prices. During the conversations, DeLuca offered

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THE UP SIDE OF THE BIG E



ROSS TAYLOR / THE HARTFORD COURANT

RYAN REYNOLDS, 12, left, and Mark Richards, 13, enjoy the Fire Ball ride at the Big E in West Springfield on Wednesday. Both children are from Springfield. The Big E is the region's main autumn country fair. Wednesday was Connecticut Day, and the state was represented at the fair by products, foods, music and various special guests. Organizers say the fair has more than a million visitors annually, many drawn not only by the farm exhibits but also by carnival rides, circus acts, food kiosks and big name concerts. The fair runs through Sept. 30. Gate admission is \$12 adults on weekdays, \$15 weekends; \$8 children ages 6 to 12 on weekdays, \$10 weekends.

High Crimes Or Misdemeanors?

Taking bribes. Marijuana possession. Driving drunk (three times). Domestic violence. Buying votes. Punching a colleague. Just how bad a crime does a lawmaker have to commit before he is thrown out? The Connecticut Senate, which has never expelled one of its own, is looking at how other states have handled the question.

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NATION/WORLD Senate Defeats Attempt To Change Iraq Policy

Senate Democrats thought they finally had a bill challenging President Bush's Iraq policy that could attract enough Republicans to meet the 60-vote threshold needed to advance. But the White House rallied the GOP opposition, and a bipartisan bid to give troops more time at home went down to defeat Wednesday. **Page A3**

LIFE Daddy, Don't Date

When children object to a parent dating, it's time to talk and listen. **Page D1**

FLAVOR Fresh Is Best

Connecticut farms can't grow fast enough for a public that has discovered that buying its produce locally is logical and healthy. Learn about Community Support Agriculture on **Page H1**.

UTC's Alternate Power Source: Bill Clinton

By ERIC GERSHON
COURANT STAFF WRITER

United Technologies Corp. has paid many former high-ranking government officials for their services, from governors to generals to a White House chief of staff. But Bill Clinton and company are working for free. For about a year, the former president's foundation has been helping the Hartford-based con-

glomerate's UTC Power division to stimulate and organize demand for buses powered by the company's fuel cell technology. The clean-energy buses use hydrogen instead of gasoline and give off water and heat instead of ozone-depleting gases. Demand for fuel cell buses has been weak so far, in part because they're expensive — about \$2 million apiece compared with as little as \$300,000 for standard diesel buses.

Last year, UTC Power and its partners sold five fuel cell buses, including one now operating in Hartford. Without greater volume, the price isn't likely to fall anytime soon and public transit agencies aren't likely to buy them. That's where the Clinton Foundation's Climate Initiative comes in. Established in August 2006, the initiative and its 80-member staff are working with more than 24 companies and 40 cities around the

world to lower the cost of clean-energy products — including fuel cell vehicles, heating and air-conditioning systems and waste-to-energy facilities — by organizing scattered market demand for them. The companies grant Clinton's team access to internal product information. Clinton's staff studies it, looking for ways to bring down costs, with the goal of a less expen-

PLEASE SEE CLINTON, PAGE A8

MOVIES SO BAD, THEY'RE FRIGHTENING

Some were horrible. Some were merely bad. Some were bad enough to watch again, and now you have your chance. Showcase Cinemas in Manchester and Springfield are showing a weekly double-feature of cheesy horror movies, from "The Brain That Wouldn't Die" and "Attack of the Giant Leeches" to "The Little Shop of Horrors."

How's your B-movie trivia? Here's one question answered in the story. **Which Academy Award-winning actor appeared with Boris Karloff in the 1963 schlock-fest "The Terror?"**
A. Bruce Dern B. Jack Nicholson C. Christopher Walken D. Dustin Hoffman E. Al Pacino
Story, **Page D1**



on the web
For more movie trivia, take an interactive quiz at www.courant.com/bmovie.

