

LAS VEGAS SUN



TWISTED CLINIC:
ARTIST'S 'OFFICE' FOR PSYCHIATRIST MAKES STATEMENTS WITH EDGY HUMOR, PAGE 7



ONE BIG VISITOR:
PRESCHOOLERS AWED AS MONSTER TRUCK DROPS IN, MAKES A LOT OF NOISE, PAGE 8

Many needy people, but housing help goes unused

Backlog in NLV leaves \$4.4 million in vouchers untouched for two years

By TIMOTHY PRATT
Las Vegas Sun

Refugees from West African civil wars. Divorced grandmothers living with friends. Homeless men. People with Los Angeles-area addresses. These were some of the 1,896 people in line in the January chill at the North Las Vegas Housing Authority two years ago, hoping their names would be drawn from a barrel so they could get on a waiting list for federally subsidized housing.

Nearly three years later, a federal inspector general's audit reveals that even those who got on the Section 8 voucher waiting list that day — as well as hundreds of families in the Las Vegas Valley — probably never got into subsidized housing.

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development audit, released this month, revealed that \$4.4 million in public money went unused during a two-year period, meaning that people eligible for the vouchers didn't get them.

"The housing authority vouchers sat in the office and were not used," HUD spokesman Larry Bush said.

Apart from highlighting implications for families across the valley, the audit calls into question the housing authority's future, because its board and staff see a plot to shut down the agency.

Housing Authority Executive Director Don England said Wednesday the audit was "accurate."

"We weren't processing them as fast as we could have," he said. The result: "Many that could've gotten housed didn't get housed."

The audit, dated Sept. 4, was the subject of a special housing authority board meeting Tuesday. The mayor and the rest of the City Council form the board.

Mayor Mike Montandon said shortly before the meeting that he thought the audit, although correct in its conclusions, reflected a "bigger picture."

He said federal officials had told him, "We want to shut you down."

HUD, he said, wants to close smaller housing authorities nationwide, and [See Housing, Page 2]



Auction staff member Chris Smith organizes guns before an auction in Pahrump. When Pahrump resident Jerry Darnell died last year, he left behind a collection of more than 4,000 guns and bayonets as well as ammunition. The Nye County Public Auction sold hundreds of guns and bayonets last weekend.

PHOTOS BY STEVE MARCUS / LAS VEGAS SUN

One man and his guns, guns and more guns

A collection built over a lifetime is going to the highest bidders

By ABIGAIL GOLDMAN, Las Vegas Sun

It's Christmas Day, Jerry Darnell is about to die and he's at Wal-Mart buying rifles. Four of them.

Darnell's cousin finds these firearms in early January, when he travels to Pahrump to make the after-death arrangements. Darnell had died of natural causes at 66.

His cousin finds the new rifles unwrapped, price tags affixed, packed in with the rest of the collection. A gun hoarder's last grasp, the end of the Darnell Weaponry Estate.

It's an arsenal, really, of about 3,800 firearms, more than 1,000 bayonets and about 250,000 rounds ammunition. The collection spans Civil War to Wal-Mart: Winchester, Smith & Wesson, Remington, Ruger, Mauser, Mosin Nagant. Weapons worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Some say it is one of the largest private gun collections in Nevada, assembled by a solitary man who lived a quiet

life in Pahrump.

Jerry Darnell was born in Hollywood in 1940, the only child of an ear, nose and throat doctor to the stars. His father turned his son on to guns, then left him with enough money to spend the rest of his life chasing them.

His cousin Bill Dearman remembers Darnell got his first gun at 10. By Darnell's early teens, his father had given him at least 100 more.

"Jerry prided his guns to the point that he was very reluctant to even let you hold one," Dearman said. "And when you held it, it was important you



Bob Martin, left, smiles as Bruce Daly feigns anger after being outbid during Sunday's auction in Pahrump. Both men are from Mesa, Ariz. A simultaneous auction was conducted online, and bidders in Pahrump could monitor that auction on a screen at the Nye County Public Auction building.

didn't touch the metal, and that he wiped the metal down afterwards."

Darnell started collecting high-quality guns, old and unusual or rare: rifles used during the Civil War, Japanese Arisakas taken during the Ameri-

can occupation after World War II, guns that date to the presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes or to the Mexican Revolution, guns with Nazi engravings, guns that collectors get hives for.

[See Guns, Page 2]



SAM MORRIS / LAS VEGAS SUN

A man who would give his name only as "Chicken George" tries to grab a few seconds of fame by waving his arms and holding a sign behind O.J. Simpson's lawyers during a news conference about Simpson's bail hearing. Simpson was released Wednesday.

Courtroom drama's Vegas sequel: Dignity-free and off-off-Strip

By BRENDAN BUHLER
Las Vegas Sun

Like anything else that was popular 10 years ago, the O.J. Simpson show has landed in Las Vegas. With a thump.

As with Broadway shows, "O.J.: The Las Vegas Spectacular" is likely to be a shell of its former self. Shorter, no doubt. The car chase scene will be cut and the Brentwood mansions have been traded for Palace Station, of all places. Worse, nearly all of the original stars are gone.

Right now, Johnny Cochran's role is being played by Yale Galanter, who

got good reviews in the Kobe Bryant and Robert Blake shows, but this is O.J. The producers ought to think big. Hasselhoff big.

Orenthal James Simpson returns as O.J., of course, but it's not enough of a speaking role to carry this thing.

The only other returning cast member, former prosecutor Marcia Clark, apparently has fallen on hard times, playing a supporting role as a legal correspondent for Entertainment Tonight. She's gone all out for this part: cosmetic surgery, blond hair, a spray-on tan and a complete dignityectomy. With her tight brown skin, she looks like glacier mummy. If she fell asleep

in the woods, archaeologists would search her pockets for arrowheads.

This is definitely an off-Strip show. Heck, it's off-off-Strip, as in Clark County Regional Justice Center.

As for Wednesday's bail hearing, it wasn't. The prosecution and the defense worked out a \$125,000 bail in advance, behind closed doors (nice Vegas touch).

That was pretty much it — everything was over in less than 10 minutes.

Thank goodness the O.J. show comes with separate, outdoor dramatic tapestry, which we in the news media just slobbered over.

[See O.J., Page 3]