

# Gulf crisis and tourism: Boom time for Las Vegas

by Lisa Southerland  
Reporter

Gas prices are up 50 percent since July. The threat of war in the Persian Gulf looms dangerously. America anticipates a major recession within two years. According to local hotels and the Las Vegas Convention/Visitor's Authority (CVA), Las Vegas tourism doesn't appear to be affected.

"Fear of impending war may make people hold off on a vacation," said Allen Feldman, vice-president of public relations at The Mirage. "But all the way through Vietnam, Las Vegas did record-breaking business."

Nancy Mamusia, spokeswoman for the Dunes Hotel/Casino said, "we were concerned when (the crisis) first started." Mamusia also said they considered possibly re-targeting the Dunes' marketing strategy in August for their drive-in traffic from Southern California, "but the need never arose."

Both hotel representatives commented that their room occupation percentages are currently at or above projected levels for the winter season.

Numbers offered by Las Ve-

gas CVA claim that hotel and motel occupation in September 1990 is down 1.7 percent compared to September 1989, even though visitor volume in Las Vegas is up 14.2 percent for the same comparison.

"You have to remember that there are 10,000 more rooms available this year than last," said

*"...all the way through Viet Nam, Vegas did record-breaking business."*

Fletch Brumelle, research coordinator at CVA.

Airline and charter flights have not been noticeably affected by the gulf crisis, despite threats of higher airline rates because of skyrocketing fuel costs. As of Sept. 30, 1990, nearly 14 million passengers flew into McCarran International Airport and Hughes Air Field.

Coincidental with the beginning of the gulf crisis, August 1990 convention attendance dropped by 11.3 percent from July, and 22.4 percent from August 1989.

But, Brumelle said, "There isn't any continuity as to when a

show will be held. A show that came in April last year might come in May the next year, so comparing month to month is not really accurate."

Official statistics were not available for car rental volumes by tourists. Car rental companies in Las Vegas for the most part have not reflected their increased gas costs to their customers.

Craig Walker, night manager at Payless Car Rental, said that September through December is usually their peak season, "but it's down this year."

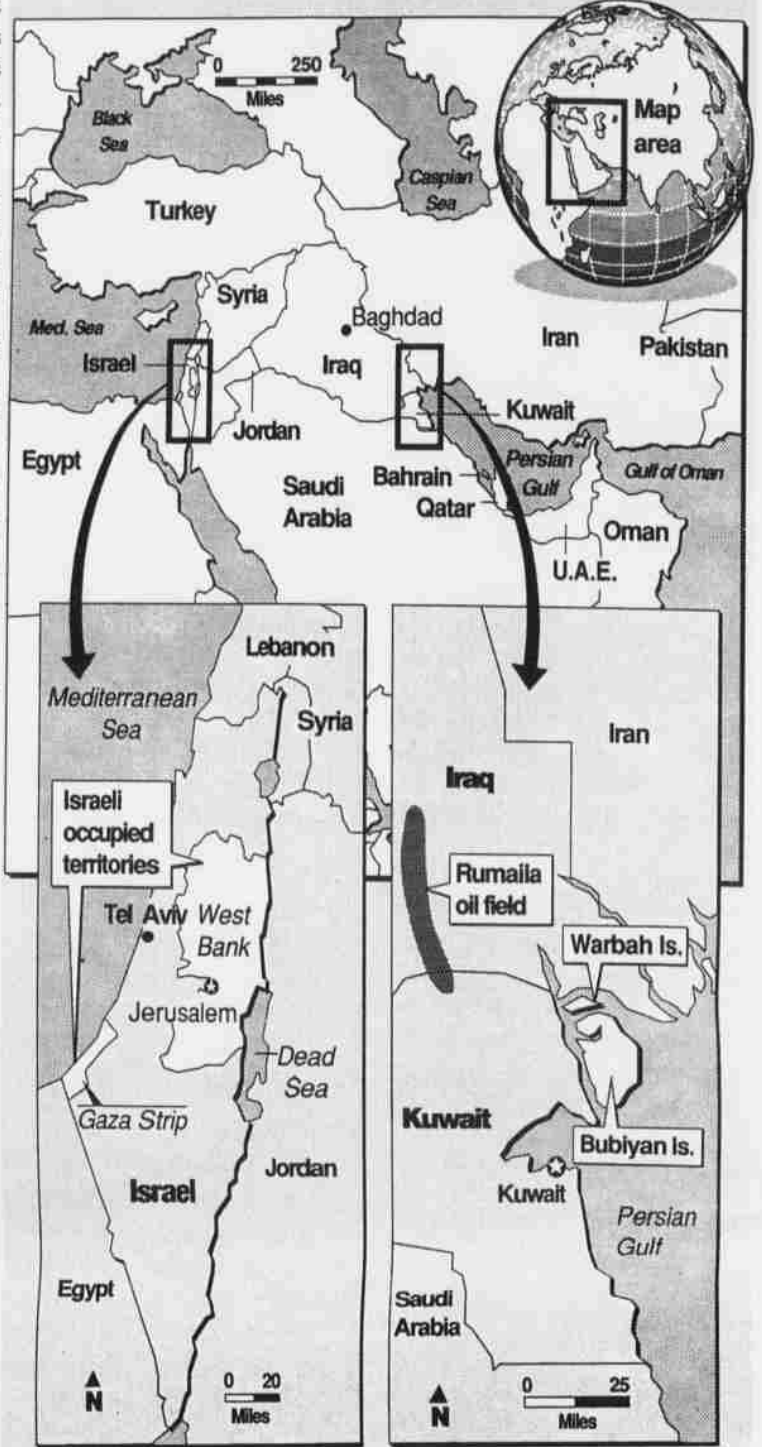
Kristen Bridges, manager of Thrifty Car Rental disagreed. "No, I would say it's even busier this year than last," she said.

Las Vegas has not suffered from the problems the Gulf Crisis has aggravated in other economies. Visitor volume in Las Vegas since September is up 12 percent from this time last year. Hoteliers are confident about their winter season. The number of conventions are up, and conventioners are spending more per delegate than ever before.

Feldman said, "Any impact the crisis will have, will have a greater effect on places other than Las Vegas."

## Parts of a middle east peace plan

Analysts suggest Iraq might withdraw from Kuwait if serious talks begin on Bubiyan and Warbah Islands, the Rumaila oil field and the fate of the Palestinians in Israeli occupied territories.



## Faculty Focus: Robert Brewer

by Theo Edwards  
Contributing Reporter

After spending 20 years in the "Big Apple," He never dreamed he would find himself living in the city of Las Vegas. But he's here, and he says he's having a great time.

Robert Brewer, associate professor in the musical theater program at UNLV, considers Las Vegas "ripe territory" economically and culturally.

"I came out here because it just seemed like UNLV might be the place to be right now," Brewer explained, "And I thought it would be fun."

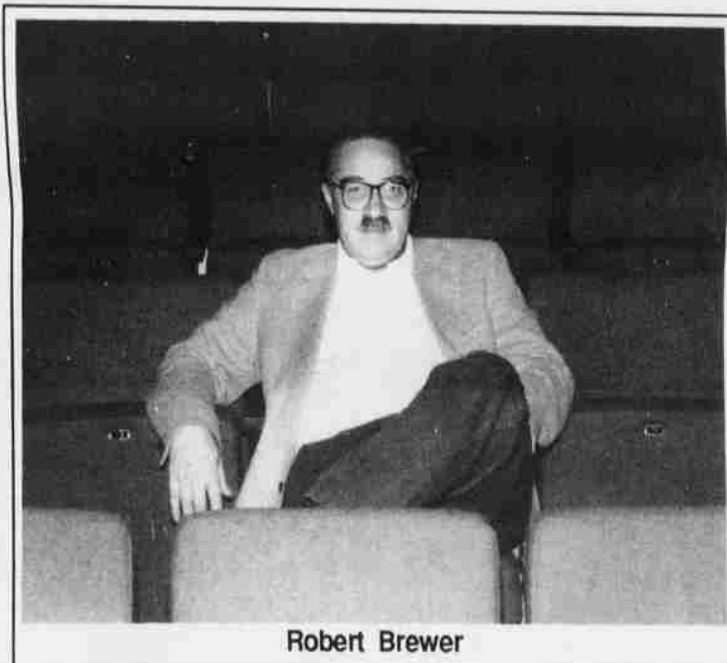
Brewer said he enjoys teaching the arts. It is through his teaching that he is able to communicate his passion for the theatre.

"His enthusiasm for what he does is quite impressive," remarked Ian Pugh, a theatre major who has worked with Brewer on several productions.

Brewer's passion for the theatre started at a young age, and although it was his father who developed his appreciation for music, it was his aunt and uncle who exposed him to the theatre during a summer he spent with them in New York City.

"My aunt and uncle were very involved in the arts," he said. "They showed me Broadway, the opera and exposed me to the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. The experience left a great impression on me."

An experience, which Brewer said influenced his passion for the theatre, took place in his hometown of Chicago upon his return from the summer in New York City. With money from his paper route, the 12-year-old Brewer was able to save up enough to buy an orchestra seat to the musical, "Gypsy," starring the legendary Ethel



Robert Brewer

Merman.

"While singing the opening number," Brewer remembered, "Merman walked out to the audience. The sight of her alone, in person, in all the glamour and grandeur, was more that I could ask for. But what took the cake was when she walked over to me and placed her hand on my shoulder as she sang! I was Flabbergasted! I knew then that I was always going to be in the theatre."

Brewer developed his interest in theatre by getting very involved with drama in high school. He continued his academic training at the University of Illinois where he received a bachelor's degree in fine arts and then at Penn State University where he received a master of fine arts degree.

His real training, however, according to Brewer, occurred while directing dramatic plays, musicals and operas professionally.

"You really learn the ropes, the business, directing professionally," said Brewer, who has professionally directed more than 50 productions.

One of Brewer's most memorable training grounds was at the Juilliard School, a conservatory in New York where he taught for three years. "It is probably the most important theatre school in the country," Brewer said.

Having come from a very academic environment at Penn State, Illinois and Harvard, he explained that the transition to the Juilliard conservatory was not a very easy one. "At first I thought they were crazy; they worked so hard," he said.

"You start at seven in the morning and you leave at midnight, if you're lucky," Brewer explained. "You work hard. You live and breathe work."

The whole experience at Juilliard was "incredible," he said. "It taught me the most effective way to train actors. I learned what professional discipline is or should be."

In addition to teaching, Brewer, who came to UNLV in 1987, also directs. His most current effort is a romantic musical entitled "Romance, Romance" which opens Jan. 24 at the Judy Bayley Theatre.

## GTE donates \$5,000 to UNLV's general scholarship fund

Through its support of the UNLV football program, GTE Directories has donated \$5,000 to the university's general scholarship fund.

GTE was the major sponsor of Rebel football Coach Jim Strong's weekly television show, which ran each Sunday at 4:30 p.m. on Channel 13. During each show Coach Strong highlighted a different person or group who played an important role in the football program this year. GTE scholarship dollars (\$500 per week) were then donated to the general fund in that person's or group's name.

Those honored this year were: UNLV's marching band; Kyle Wilson, head trainer for the football team, and his assistants; Paul Pucciarelli, equipment manager; Dave Pappas, senior defensive lineman; Kevin Sweeney, academic counselor; Keenan McCardell, wide receiver; Hunkie Cooper, quarterback; Derek Stott, quarterback; Carlton Johnson, defensive back; Brad Orick and Darrel Randle, tight ends; and Tim Wilson, strength coach.

GTE also co-sponsored the Rebels' season opener, and during each home game sponsored the Kicks For Cash promotion, which offered fans up to \$350 for successful field goal tries.

"UNLV is a young and thriving university and has the total support of the community," said John Bortoletto, GTE's area division manager. "It's great to be able to give to the community in such an exciting and rewarding way."

## Iowa's radioactive dog burning is safe

(CPS) - The University of Iowa's controversial plan to burn 1,000 carcasses of dogs previously used in medical research has been approved as safe by state health officials, UI health administrator William Twaler said Sept. 27. Twaler estimated that five to 15 percent of the radioactive tracers once injected into the dogs may be released when the bodies are incinerated, but said the radioactivity could be readily contained.