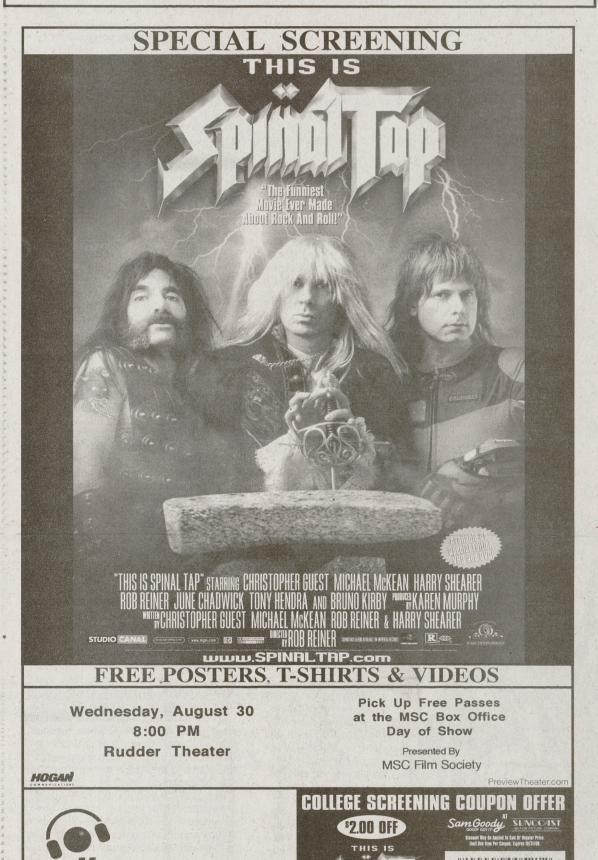
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Fire takes Russian TV towe

Firefighters have difficulty in calming flam

MOSCOW (AP) - Fire en- on the city. Thousands of people ers and a female elevator on gulfed the Ostankino television thronged to the base of the tower, tower, the world's second-tallest freestanding structure, trapping four people in an elevator and knocking out most TV channels in the Russian capital Sunday.

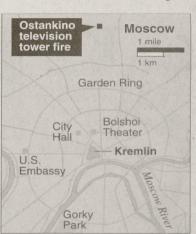
Firefighters have had trouble fighting the fire, which started about 1,520 feet above ground, due to the difficulty of hauling equipment, including chemical fire extinguishers, up so many flights of stairs. The tower's spire is narrow at that point and the cramped quarters hampered movement.

Dozens of tired, smoke-stained firefighters in heavy rubber coats sat on the grass around the tower in northern Moscow late Sunday. Scores of fire engines and ambulances were parked at the bottom of the tower, which was lighted by at least three searchlights, as officials tried to figure out a way to fight the blaze.

Yellow flames licked from the glassed-in platform as darkness fell

gathering in a carnival atmosphere, drinking beer, laughing and a few dancing to transistor radios before they were pushed back by police.

Rescuers battled to locate the stuck elevator where three firefight-



were trapped about 860 feet ground, said Nikolai Sarychev

The 1,771-foot futuristic shaped like a giant needle, is an lar tourist attraction. It has an vation deck and restaurant about thirds of the way up. The fire well above that level, and of

Sarychev said no one so been killed or injured in the bla The cause of the fire was mediately known, but initial said it apparently was starte

ing to a paging company. The fire began at about 3:30 By midnight, flames and smo lowed out of much of the tower looms over a large park, and a of smoke towered over the city

A huge helicopter capable dropping water from a gian was brought to the scene but not immediately deployed.

Excavation site shows new syphilis theory

vations at a medieval friary in Northern England add weight to the theory that syphilis did not come to Europe from the New World.

Skeletons excavated at Hull, dated to between 1300 and 1450, had clear signs of syphilis, said Anthea Boylston, a paleopathologist and leader of an archaeological team from University of Bradford in north England that conducted the dig. Several other skeletons also showed signs of the disease, she said.

"The disease, which takes some 20 years before it begins to leave its mark on the bone, was quite advanced at the time of death."

> — David Evans excavation director

Scientists long have argued about whether syphilis was brought to the Americas by European explorers, transmitted the other way around, or arose independently in each region. Skeletons studied earlier in Europe have suggested that the disease was present before Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage.

Europeans seemed to become aware of the disease after 1500, but some researchers believe that syphilis may have been confused with leprosy in earlier times.

velops into a rash, fever and fatigue, and years after initial infection, may develop into severe complications of the heart and brain.

"This discovery changes our views about the history of syphilis," Boylston said. "There had been a couple of skeletons around the country with signs of syphilis that could have predated Columbus, but the interesting thing about this burial site is there are cases of the disease in many individuals, not just one or two," she said.

That makes us think that syphilis was present in medieval England.

David Evans, who directed excavations at the Augustinian friary, dated the skeletons somewhat later — between 1450 and 1475 — based on stratification.

Four skeletons showed signs of the disease, Evans said in an article in the June edition of British Archaeology.

'The disease, which takes some 20 years before it begins to leave its mark on the bone, was quite advanced at the time of death," Evans wrote. "These victims had contracted syphilis long before the return of Columbus and his ships from the New World — traditionally regardwas introduced into Europe.

Donald J. Ortner, curator of physical anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., said Monday that the discoveries at Hull help to clarify some issues regarding the biological origin of the disease.

"I think a very plausible case can be made for it being syphilis," said Ortner, who said it also was possible it may have been yaws or bejel, related diseases that are not spread by sexual contact.

department spokesman at the

said all visitors were evacuate

short-circuit in equipment be

2 million attend

Pope John Paul II basked Suntin in the success of the church's est World Youth Day, lauding "joyous and peaceful" young grims who took part.

The six-day gathering peaker Aug. 19-20. An estimated 2m lion pilgrims camped a overnight outside Rome to pu and celebrate Mass with Jo Paul — one of Europe's bigg youth assemblies ever.

"Their great numbers made vivid impression on all," Paul said Sunday, speaking faithful gathered in the courty of his summer retreat at Car Gandolfo outside Rome.

"Joyous, peaceful youngs ple, ready to smile and say he respectful of the city and of ture," the pope said. For thep grims, he said, the event 'only the first step in the pa

that must be followed." The young people for a time matched — or outnumberedthe vacation-time population

The city managed the thron contempt and with few reported problems. \$390,000, sayi gravest was a subway escale misleading that bucked under the weight presided over young pilgrims, throwing and juring several.

John Paul started the Yound do so be Day tradition in 1984. The lago country came gathering was in the Philippin in 1995, when 4 million youing Clinton n people attended.

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