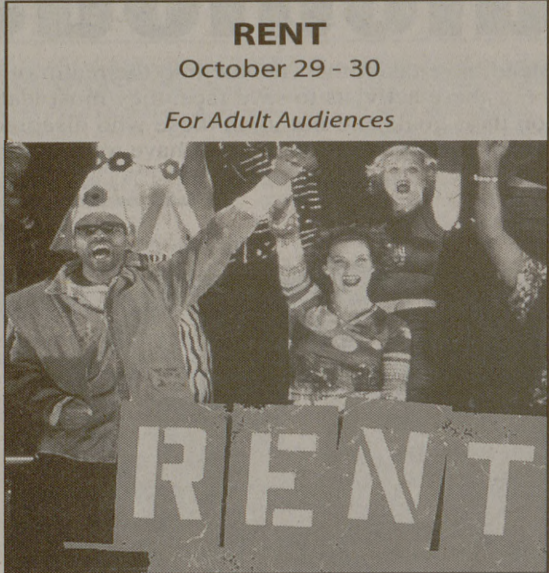


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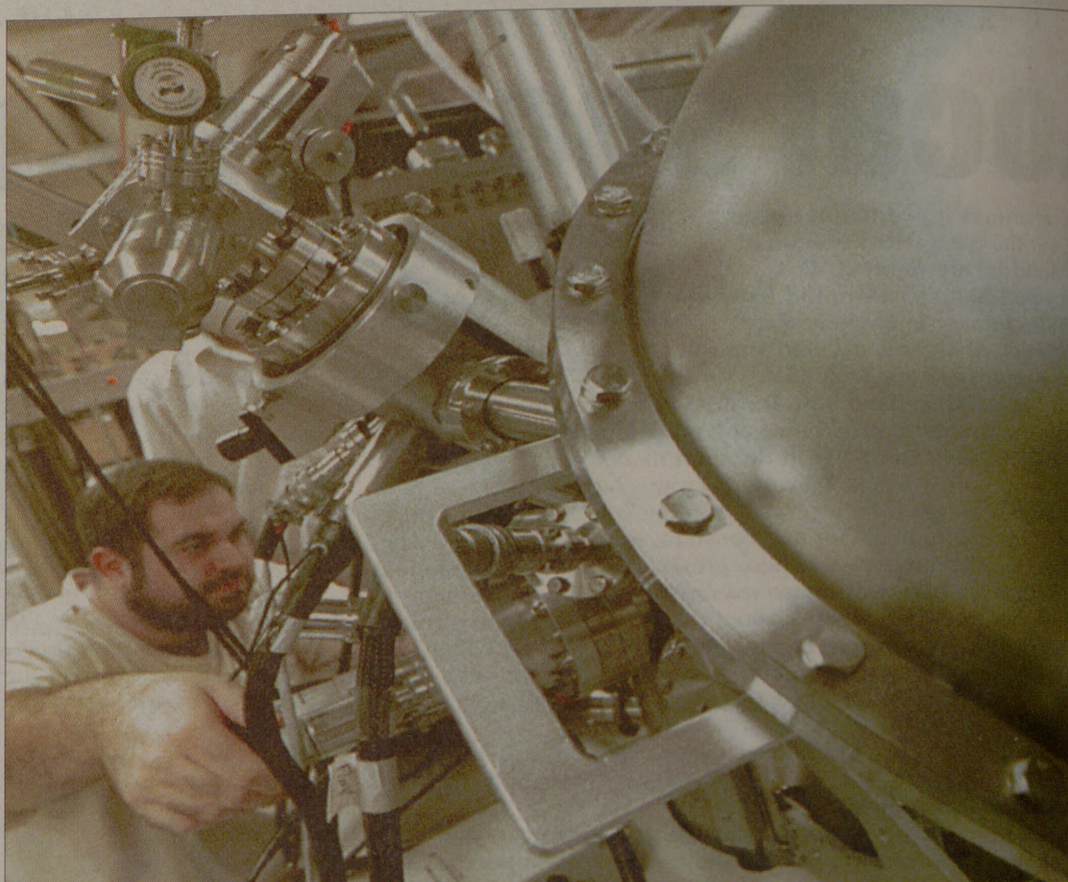


MOSCOW SOLOISTS with YURI BASHMET
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THE MUSIC MAN
April 22 and 23

Fuel cell



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Chemistry researcher **Dr. Jeff Stultz** begins a fuel cell experiment in the chemistry building with a machine called an x-ray photo electron spectrometer. The machine decomposes methane into hydrogen, which is the primary

component of fuel cells. Fuel cells are used for electricity in space crafts, space stations, and most recently, electric cars. The research is overseen by **Dr. D. Wayne Goodman**, who recently received a grant from the state of Texas.

Planes grounded in midst of one of worst fire seasons

(AP) — The nation's C-130A air tankers, workhorse of the firefighting fleet, were grounded Tuesday in the midst of what could become one of the worst fire seasons in history after a plane lost its wings and nosedived in Northern California, killing all three people aboard.

Fires burning in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming and Utah have destroyed nearly a half-million acres of forest and brush. Thousands of people have been forced out of their homes and more than 60 homes destroyed, most of those in Colorado.

Federal forest officials say more than 1.5 million acres have burned across the country in 2002 — nearly twice the 10-year average for this time of year.

Firefighting efforts turned deadly Monday in Walker, Calif.

A C-130A had just completed a pass over a fire in the Sierra Nevada range when its wings snapped off and the fuselage plunged to the ground, bursting into a ball of flame.

A few hours before the crash, three firefighters in Southern California were burned when flames leaped over their fire truck parked near Interstate 15. They were expected to be released from the hospital by Wednesday,

shaken by the experience.

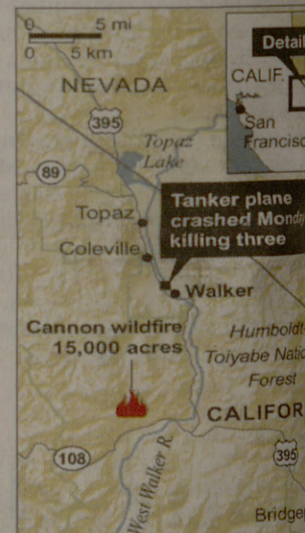
"For a few seconds, I thought it was over," said firefighter Thomas Lotko, 45, from his hospital bed where he was hooked to an IV and had his hands and elbows swathed in bandages. Only the thin skins of emergency fire blankets saved his two colleagues from burning to death.

The C-130A tankers are only a fraction of the National Interagency Fire Center's fleet of 43 contract planes. Nancy Lull, a spokeswoman for the fire center in Boise, Idaho, said the five planes will be grounded for at least two days while their safety is evaluated.

"It was shocking to see the wings basically break off in mid-air," said Rep. Jim Gibbons, R-Nev., after watching television footage of the crash. Gibbons is a pilot who has about 1,000 hours of experience flying C-130s.

The plane was fighting a 10,000-acre blaze north of Yosemite National Park. Investigators were trying to determine if a practice campfire set by Marine trainees started the blaze Saturday.

Other fires burning included a 100,000-acre fire in Alaska's interior and a trio of Colorado fires that have destroyed more than 163,000 acres.



SOURCES: Associated Press, USGS, National Forest Service

The largest of the Colorado fires was allegedly set by a Forest Service worker who faces charges in federal court.

Hot, windy weather pushed that fire to 113,000 acres and sent smoke pouring into Denver where authorities warned the young, elderly and those with respiratory ailments to stay inside. At least 5,500 people remained out of their homes Tuesday.

But the top firefighting priority in the Rocky Mountain region was a 38,000-acre blaze in southwestern Colorado.

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