

news

Organizers work out inauguration details

By MICHAEL E. RUANE
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WASHINGTON — Want to attend the big Jan. 20 inauguration?

It will be historic and stirring, so get ready to speed-dial your favorite Washington hotel. Call your member of Congress, who, eventually, will distribute free tickets.

But coming to town could cost some people a mint.

Those interested in the Royal Suite at the Four Seasons Hotel will pay \$15,000 a night, with a five-night minimum. If they spring for the Ritz-Carlton Washington, it's \$50,000 for the four-night package.

Available at the Marriott on Pennsylvania Avenue is a \$1 million extravaganza — you get 300 rooms!

Sure, the event is three months away, and many details are "outcome dependent," as the military's inauguration planners say. But the buzz is on, tickets have been printed and workers are already nailing together the giant inaugural platform at the Capitol.

For some things, it's actually late in the game.

The 80-year-old Hay-Adams Hotel, for example, with its primo pedigree and location across Lafayette Square from the White House, already has sold out its inauguration packages. "Because of our location, we tend

to get booked pretty quickly," a spokeswoman said.

The arts advocacy group Creative Coalition has lined up movie types including Spike Lee, Susan Sarandon and Barry Levinson for its ball, no matter who wins. For \$100,000 you get 50 tickets, for \$50,000 you get 16.

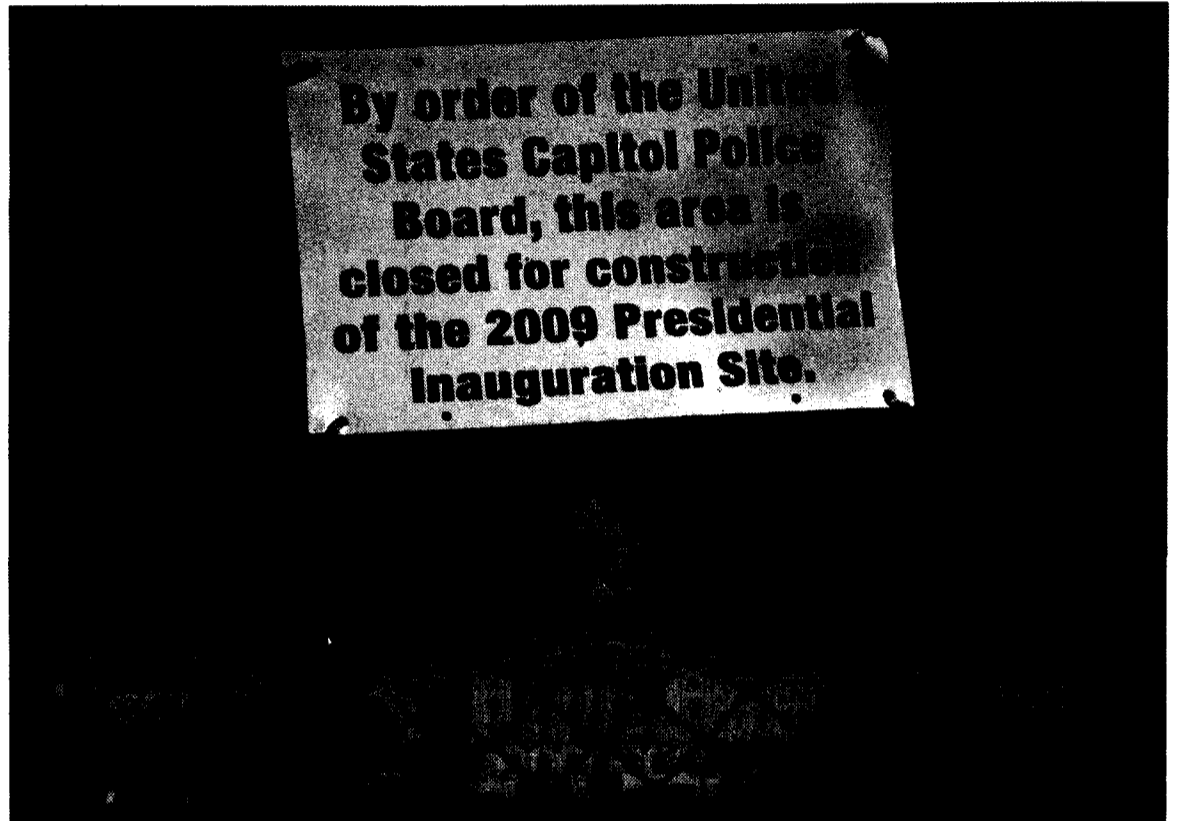
And in the Ritz-Carlton's lounges you can order an Obama Pama — pomegranate liqueur, vodka and triple sec — or Palin's Pit Bull, with rum, cranberry juice and Red Bull. (The chefs wanted to do something with moose meat, in honor of Gov. Sarah Palin's Alaska connection, but apparently it's illegal to sell it, spokeswoman Colleen Evans said. A type of elk burger will have to do.)

Many snazzy downtown hotels say they've had plenty of inquiries and expect an explosion of bookings the moment the election is decided.

"It'll be wild the day after," Evans said. "It's going to be a really big deal. It's really going to be history. We have no doubt we're going to sell out. You'll even see a lot of sellout situations in the suburbs."

The Internet is humming with messages from people offering and seeking inexpensive private lodging for the event. For local apoliticos, a Taos, N.M., couple recently offered a house swap on the Craigslist Web site: "If you want to escape the madness for a week, here's your chance."

The Joint Congressional



Washington Post photo by BILL O'LEARY

Signs are posted at the western edge of the Capitol showing that preparations and construction are under way for the Jan. 20 inauguration.

Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, which plans the swearing-in at the Capitol, had most of the 240,000 tickets printed and counted "in a very secure setting" over the summer, said staff director Howard Gantman.

"The last inaugural, more than 200,000 people were there," he said. "With the interest in this election, there could be significantly more."

"The tickets are distributed through the Senate offices and the

House offices" and through the Presidential Inaugural Committee, set up by the winning candidate, he said. "Constituents around the country are urged to contact their House or Senate members."

The free, color-coded tickets are unavailable until the last minute, to try to keep them from being sold, he said. Most people won't be able to get their tickets until the week before the inauguration, when "each (legislator's) office will have to come to us, to a

secure location, to pick up the tickets that have been provided for that office," he said.

It is not yet known how many tickets each member of Congress will get — usually it's several hundred. People assigned tickets must pick them up at their legislator's office on Capitol Hill.

The viewing area extends

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MESSAGE: No intent to do harm, say police

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family had not seen him. They later told Ilyomade Police Services wanted to speak with him, he said.

Ilyomade and the two current PSH students were "very cooperative" during the investigation, said Police Services.

PSH sent two e-mails to students and faculty regarding the messages and police investigation. However, the PSUTXT system was not used

because Police Services found there was no intent of harm, said Stoehr.

Messages exchanged between the first two PSH students expressed discontent with the election outcome, but were not threatening, said Stoehr. The two students also told Police Services they did not know Ilyomade, he added, but that he may have been a friend of a friend.

"We don't think there was any threat to anybody. It was just blown out of proportion," said Stoehr.

Police Services believed the message posted by Ilyomade was less threatening than ones posted by former PSH student Steven A. Voneida on his MySpace.com profile on April 18, 2007.

Voneida was found guilty by a federal court judge in February and sentenced to 33 months in prison after posting threats referencing the Virginia Tech shooting. Voneida, currently in prison, was also found in illegal possession of firearms.

Memorial service held on campus for Professor Eton Churchill

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On Friday, Nov. 14, Penn State Harrisburg held a memorial service for the late Professor Eton Churchill in the Morrison Gallery.

It was clear from all the people who gathered that afternoon to celebrate his life that he was a wonderful man who touched many peoples' lives all over the world.

When Professor Churchill came to Penn State Harrisburg many years ago, the Communications program was certainly not an established major program, but simply an option to append to a Humanities degree.

It was his project and goal to help develop that mere academic option into a thriving curriculum of learning for all those students interested in

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