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Senate President Pro Tempore Strom Thurmond, left, swears in Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist.

Clinton's trial begins

Chief justice, senators sworn in; decision on witnesses postponed

House GOP and Hyde under fire

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — When a reporter asked Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., Thursday morning about his most recent conversations with Rep. Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill., he responded: "I talked to Senator — to Congressman Hyde this morning and just sort of went over what my thinking was."

Lott's quick correction notwithstanding, several Democrats angrily complained Thursday that Hyde was indeed being treated like a senator — one who was exerting more control over the process than they were.

As the Senate continued to struggle over how to conduct President Clinton's impeachment trial, several members — particularly Democrats — angrily accused the House of trying to dictate terms of the process.

The two chambers have been sniping for days, despite predictions from senators that the impeachment proceedings would move into a more decorous phase in the upper chamber. Several Democrats have angrily denounced the House "managers" presenting the case against Clinton and said GOP leaders in the Senate have gone too far to accommodate their desire to call witnesses and hold a full trial.

Republicans "made a mess of it in the House, and now they're trying to redeem themselves in the Senate," Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., said Thursday.

Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, accused House Republicans of "gross hypocrisy" for insisting that witnesses be called in the Senate when none were called during the House impeachment hearings. He and others said they believed at least six Republican senators — enough for a majority, including the Democrats — did not want

TENSION continued on Page 7A



House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., center, accompanied by committee counsel Thomas Mooney, left, and other Republican committee members, walks to the Senate chamber on Capitol Hill to deliver his committee's articles of impeachment against President Clinton.

Photos by The Associated Press

Pomp and history — and chaos



"All we want is a fair process that gets to the truth."

TRENT LOTT
R-Miss.By LANCE GAY
Scripps Howard News Service

WASHINGTON — One senator said the view from the Senate floor reminded him of a hanging. Another said he sat there musing over the meaning of the four gold stripes on the black robe worn by Chief Justice William Rehnquist. A third said she was caught in awe of the seriousness of the occasion.

So it was Thursday that the full weight of the Constitution fell on the shoulders of 100 senators ordered into silence to begin the impeachment trial of President Clinton.

While it was all proper order on

the Senate floor for the first presidential impeachment in 130 years, in the ornate Senate corridors there was chaos.

Throughout the day, senators scurried from closed-door caucus to closed-door caucus, or met in knots and caucuses to try to work out some sort of plan to get the trial over as quickly as possible.

"Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye," intoned Senate Sergeant at Arms James Ziglar, reciting the traditional call to order in the Senate. "All persons are commanded to keep silent on pain of imprisonment, while the House of Representatives is exhibiting to the Senate of the United States, articles of

impeachment against William Jefferson Clinton, president of the United States."

A hush fell across the historic chamber, which was crammed with visitors, as Rehnquist told the senators to stand as he gave them their oath:

"Do you solemnly swear that in all things appertaining to the trial of the impeachment of William Jefferson Clinton, president of the United States, now pending, you will do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws, so help you God?" he said.

Sen. Richard Durbin, D-Ill., said that moment felt as if history was

SCENE continued on Page 7A

■ A vote on competing trial plans was called off, and senators of both parties will meet today to seek agreement.

By ALISON MITCHELL and ERIC SCHMITT
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — In a hushed chamber under heavy security, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist on Thursday opened the first presidential impeachment trial in 131 years, swearing in senators to "do impartial justice" in judging whether President William Jefferson Clinton should be removed from office for perjury and obstruction of justice.

The trial of the nation's 42nd president formally began as senators struggled through another day, searching for a way around the impasse between the two parties over whether to call witnesses. The mood swung wildly throughout the day. Bipartisan bonhomie in the morning gave way to recriminations that left the parties at the brink of a showdown vote over competing trial plans in the late afternoon.

But desperately trying to stave off the rancorous partisanship of the House, the two parties pulled back from the confrontation and planned an unusual joint caucus of all 100 senators in the Capitol's rarely used ceremonial Old Senate Chamber this morning. Sen. Trent Lott, the majority leader, and Sen. Tom Daschle, the minority leader, appeared together Thursday night to announce the meeting.

"We think the best way to keep cool and calm and dignified is to hear each other and talk to each other," Lott said. "Now does that solve all the problems? No."

At the White House, Joe Lockhart, Clinton's press secretary, said the president's lawyers would "make a compelling case that will lead the United States Senate not to remove the president." He said Clinton was willing to agree to accept many of the facts in the case as set out by Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel, in order to avoid the need for witnesses.

But he warned sharply that the introduction of witnesses would draw out the trial, "because bringing witnesses in and not stipulating to a record opens up a whole area of motions, discovery and depositions. And that takes time."

The impeachment trial of Clinton officially began just before 10 a.m., when a procession of 13 House Republicans who will act as prosecutors at the trial paraded past the marble statuary on the second floor of the Capitol and into the Senate chamber.

"Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye!" the Senate sergeant-at-arms, James W. Ziglar, called out to the 100 senators and spectators in the visitors' galleries. "All persons are commanded to keep silent on pain of imprisonment." It

IMPEACH continued on Page 7A



Rehnquist

What's next?

THE SENATE TRIAL
■ There will be a joint caucus of all 100 senators in the Capitol's ceremonial Old Senate Chamber today.

INSIDE

■ A look at the layout of the Senate for the upcoming trial. Page 7A.

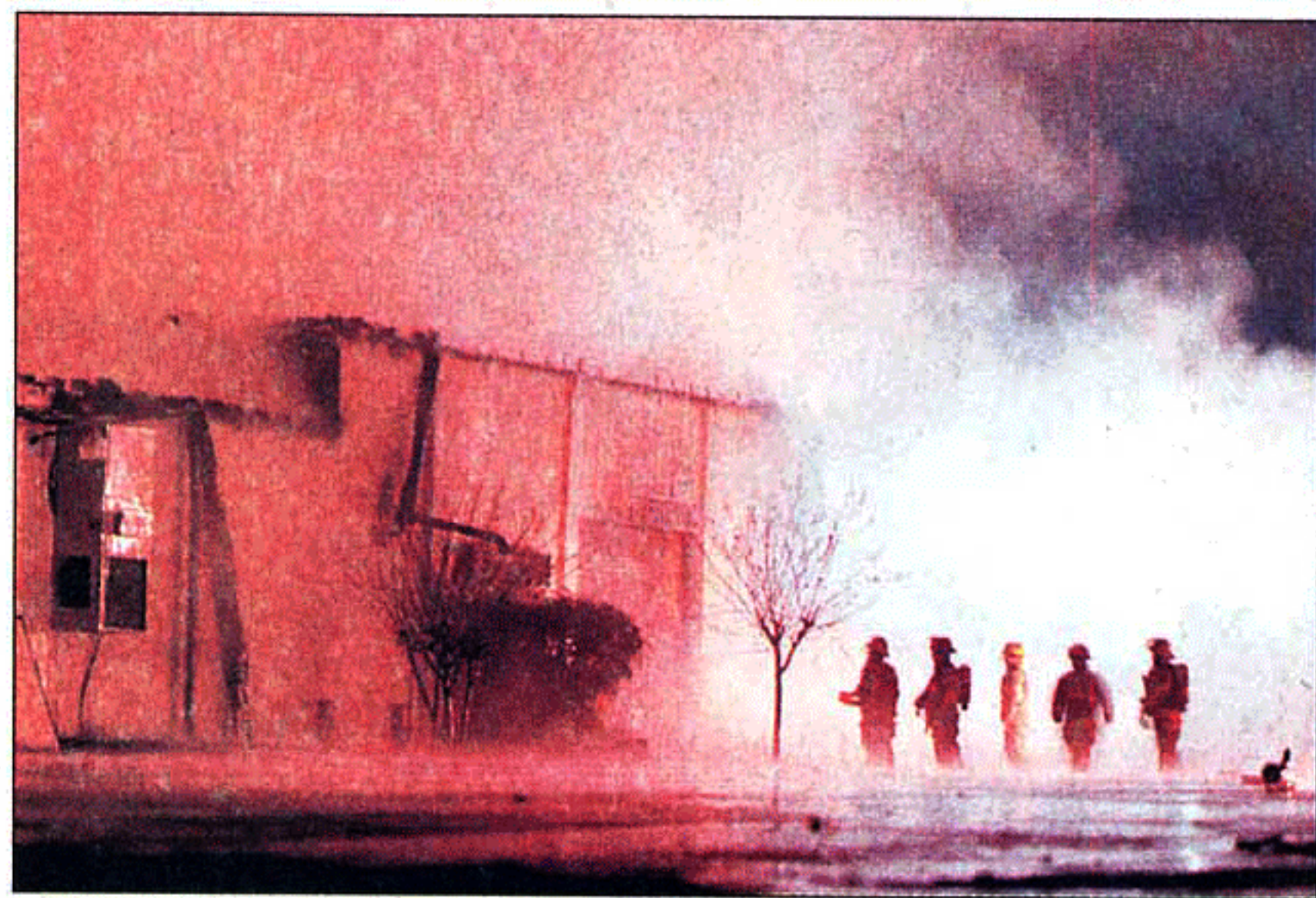
QST fire destroys building

■ Explosions and a brief evacuation follow.

By CINDY SWIRKO
and FLORIDA A. BRIDGEWATER
Sun staff writers

Fire destroyed a building at QST Environmental Inc. in Jonesville early Thursday morning, causing explosions that quaked neighboring homes and spurred a short-lived evacuation.

The cause of the 2 a.m. fire has not been determined. A damage



A fire of unknown origin destroyed a 5,000-square-foot building at the QST Environmental site in Jonesville early Thursday.

estimate was originally pegged at \$4.5 million by fire officials, but QST Associate Vice President Bill Marsh later said he is not certain how accurate that estimate is.

No one was injured. Emergency

officials blocked a section of Newberry Road in the vicinity of QST, which is on SW 140th Terrace just south of Newberry Road. Five homes in the nearby Jockey Club

FIRE continued on Page 6A

UF class is going wireless

■ Students will test the new computers.

By BRIAN GELLER
Sun staff writer

Wires, that seemingly essential part of the computer world, will be missing from at least one University of Florida technology class this semester.

A spring course will introduce students to wireless computing. With UF President John Lombardi and industry officials watching, professors demonstrated the

WIRELESS continued on Page 6A

AS GREEN AS IT GETS "Waking Ned Devine," a tale of a quirky Irish village, opens here today.

SCENE, PAGE 16

THIS DATE IN HISTORY JAN. 8, 1925



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Grand jury indicts friend of Willey

■ She's accused of lying to cast doubt on a charge against Clinton.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A friend whose testimony cast doubt on Kathleen Willey's allegation of an unwanted sexual advance by President Clinton was indicted Thursday on charges she obstructed justice and made up her story.

A grand jury in Alexandria, Va., working with Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr charged Julie Hiatt Steele of Richmond, Va., with three counts of obstruction of justice and one count of false statements.

Among other things, the indictment accused Steele of filing a false affidavit in Paula Jones' sexual harassment suit against Clinton, lying to two grand juries and attempting to influence the testimony of other witnesses.

Steele's lawyers in Washington

and Richmond did not immediately return calls to their offices seeking comment.

The president's lawyers had used Steele's testimony in an effort to cast doubt on the credibility of Willey, a former White House volunteer who alleges Clinton made an unwanted sexual advance toward her in the Oval Office in 1993.

Clinton denies Willey's accusation, which became a focus of Jones' sexual harassment lawsuit. In his testimony in the Jones lawsuit, the president said Willey "was not telling the truth" and that her credibility had been "pretty well shattered."

The indictment notes that a lawyer for Clinton approached Steele in January 1998 to get her to file the affidavit and that she initially refused, then changed her mind. Steele eventually filed an affidavit in the Jones lawsuit alleging that Willey never told her about the alleged advance as she had



Julie Hiatt Steele leaves federal court in Washington in this June 11, 1998 file photo.

claimed.

But Starr alleged Thursday that the affidavit and Steele's subsequent testimony before two federal grand juries were false.

Steele "well knew and believed" Willey had told her about the alleged sexual advance shortly after it happened and "even related information about Mrs. Willey's account of the incident to several of defendant Steele's friends" as early as 1993, the indictment charged.

Tripp tries to raise funds

■ The Pentagon aide faces large legal bills.

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Linda Tripp needs money, "urgently." Although she now earns \$90,767 a year in her Pentagon public affairs job, thanks to a recent "longevity" raise, she says there's just not enough left over to make a dent in her mounting legal bills.

So in a 12-page fund-raising letter now arriving in selected mailboxes across the country, the Maryland woman whose secret tapes led to the impeachment of President Clinton is asking for help in fighting off the assaults of his "henchmen" and "disciples."

"Their approach has always been to attack, discredit and destroy their opponents," Tripp says in the letter asking for contributions to Linda R. Tripp Legal Defense Fund. "Now they have me in their cross hairs and I feel like David up against Goliath."

Her legal bills are already more than \$325,000 and "growing every day," Tripp says. She was compelled to give a deposition in an anti-Clinton civil suit this week after her lawyers were rebuffed in an effort to block the appearance. She is on a list of witnesses who might be called to testify at Clinton's impeachment trial in the



Linda Tripp arrives at the offices of Judicial Watch, a public interest law firm, in Washington in this Dec. 14, 1998, file photo.

Senate. She is under investigation by a Maryland grand jury for taping her conversations with Monica Lewinsky about sex in the White House.

One of the trustees of the defense fund, Bill Parris, a retired insurance executive who has never met Tripp and was enlisted by one of her lawyers, said the letters started going out Dec. 31 and he hopes they will raise \$60,000 to \$80,000. About 20,000 are being

sent out, by a direct-mail operation in Virginia whose name he said he couldn't recall.

"I got a whole bunch of lawyers wanting money from me," Parris said this week. He joked, "After I take my wife to Bermuda, I might even have some left over for (them)."

The fund-raising letter, Tripp's first, gives a first-person account of Tripp's predicament that associates said she reviewed and edited. It also appears to contradict some things she has said in the past.

For instance, Tripp traces her troubles back to Nov. 29, 1993, when she said another White House aide, Kathleen E. Willey, "her lipstick smeared and her blouse untucked," came to see Tripp after an encounter in the Oval Office.

"Ms. Willey then volunteered to me that President Clinton had just sexually assaulted her while they were alone in his office," Tripp says in the letter.

In testimony before a federal grand jury last June 30, however, Tripp said the episode came after a series of flirtatious approaches on Willey's part and that "it just seemed to be as consenting adults."

Willey, Tripp testified, "was very excited, very flustered" as she told Tripp what happened and "she smiled from ear to ear the entire time. She seemed almost shocked, but happy shocked."

QST fire comes during shakeup

■ The blaze is not expected to impact the company's sale.

By CHARLES BOISSEAU
Sun business editor

The fire at QST Environmental comes at a time when the company is up for sale and restructuring its operations.

The Peoria, Ill.-based environmental consulting and testing company last month announced it would close its analytical laboratory in Jonesville and lay off about 30 employees.

Those cutbacks are expected to be completed within about a month, Bill Marsh, associate vice president and QST's senior officer in Gainesville, said Thursday.

The layoffs are the latest in a series of job cuts at QST, which is struggling to adapt to a decline in what has been its core business, environmental remediation, to shift its focus primarily to environmental consulting work.

The company will have between 100 and 110 workers here after the latest round of layoffs.

The maintenance building destroyed by the fire and explosions held, among other things, equipment used to sample soil and water and monitor air quality, Marsh said.

The company is "scrambling on a couple projects" to obtain replacement equipment, but otherwise its operations won't be affected, he said. "Our people came to work as usual this morning; there's no disruption of operations," Marsh said.

QT, which was founded in Gainesville in 1960 as Environmental Science and Engineering, has its largest operation centered in the Gainesville area, he said.

QT's parent company, Cilcorp, a utility holding company that owns Central Illinois Light Co., in November agreed to sell to another power company, AES Corp. of Arlington, Va.

As a result, Cilcorp has put QST on a trading block, seeking to sell the environmental consulting company before the AES deal is completed in the next few months.

The destruction of the maintenance building would have "absolute no impact on that (sale) at all," said Jeff McCombs, spokesman for QST in Peoria.

"e're just glad no one was hurt

FIRE: No one injured in blaze

Continued from 1A

Officials learned that no hazardous materials were involved.

Ironically, the house closest to QST was not evacuated.

"Nobody came by here. I saw it out my bedroom window. I heard what sounded like small explosions and then a huge one. You could feel it. The house shook a bit," said Noah Bate, whose 138th Terrace home abuts QST property. "It was pretty unusual. I didn't really see any fire except reflections in the sky of what I thought was fire."

Alachua County Fire Rescue spokesman Alan Harris said the fire was reported by a company security officer.

The officer had previously been by the building — which housed water and air monitoring equipment, a lab, offices and supplies — about midnight and noticed workers in the building, Harris said.

At 2:10 the officer again patrolled around the building. This time he saw flames but no employees. Firefighters got the call at 2:14 a.m.

"From a distance, our engine actually noticed a big ball of flames in the trees," Harris said. "We called the hazardous materials team because we weren't sure of what was in the warehouse. We also closed two miles east and west on Newberry Road and also closed part of County Road 241."

Harris said the evacuation was just under way when QST officials arrived and said it was not necessary because few chemicals were in the building.

Only a few homes were

"We have no idea what the cause was at present."

BILL MARSH
QST associate vice president

evacuated before the action was called off.

"Police knocked on the door and told us we could go to a church near here. There was nobody there," said a Jockey Club resident who would not give her name. "We drove around for a few minutes and then the police said we could go back in."

Firefighters had the blaze under control and the operation cleared by 3:10, Harris said. A firefighting crew remained at the scene to handle smoldering hot spots through the morning.

QST is on 52 acres at the end of 140th Terrace. Marsh said the fire was in one of eight buildings at the complex. The destroyed building was a few hundred feet from the main building.

Marsh said operations were not hampered by the fire and work resumed as normal in the morning.

"It was in our facilities building that is used primarily for storage of equipment and files and as a receiving area. It's about 5,000 square feet," Marsh said. "The damage to that building was extensive. There were no injuries. We have no idea what the cause was at present."

The building contained several cylinders of compressed gas, which may have caused the explosions once the fire started, Marsh said.

Erin said it could take up to two weeks to determine the cause. Arson is not suspected, he added.

Marsh said QST's hazardous materials are common items and in small quantities. Included are solvents such as acetone and alcohol, acids such as sulfuric and hydrochloric acids, bases such as sodium hydroxide.

Quantities range from less than a pound for some items to 15-gallon barrels for others, Marsh said.

Marsh said it is not uncommon to have employees working at night. The company has recently had layoffs and now employs about 120 people. The company has been at its Jonesville location almost 30 years. A small fire occurred at QST in December 1997.

According to county Environmental Protection Department reports, QST Environmental was inspected twice in 1998, March 18 and May 5.

During the March inspection no violations were found, but the May 5 inspectors found the company did not have a complete set of receipts for its hazardous wastes.

When a company completes a chemical process and generates a hazardous waste, usually the waste is shipped to a recycling facility. Companies must have receipts for those disposals.

"What happens (is) sometimes we go to a business and they don't have all of the receipts at that location; they have them at other locations," said Gus Olmos, county environmental engineer. "But, other than that, that was the only violation."

QST officials corrected the violation on May 14.

Tripp now in Whitewater case

■ The former secretary says she believes she saw Hillary Clinton's billing records in Vince Foster's office.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Linda Tripp was the last person to see Vincent Foster alive. She taped her young friend Monica Lewinsky, which led to the investigation of a presidential affair.

Now, Tripp says she may have seen billing records from Hillary Rodham Clinton's law firm in a safe in Vince Foster's office. The White House had said the records were lost for a few years, but they mysteriously turned up later in the White House residence.

"I saw what I now believe to be the infamous billing records in that safe," Tripp said in a deposition this

week for the conservative legal group Judicial Watch.

Tripp, a Pentagon employee, also said she may have seen Mrs. Clinton's initials on the records.

Tripp was secretary to Foster, the deputy White House counsel who committed suicide in 1993. She told Judicial Watch that in 1993 she might have seen the billing records, but didn't realize what they were until January 1996, when it was revealed in congressional hearings that the records appeared on a table in the White House. Whitewater prosecutors had subpoenaed the records two years before. The White House said they could not be located.

"I wouldn't know a billing record if it hit me on the head," Tripp told Judicial Watch, which has sued the Clinton administration on behalf of people whose FBI files were gathered by the White House.

But Tripp said that after she saw a photo of the records on the news in 1996, she realized that what she saw in 1993 may have been the billing records.

Hillary-for-Senate whispers grow

■ The first lady has not announced future plans.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Hillary Rodham Clinton's supporters are quietly circulating her name as a possible candidate to run for the Senate from New York, and the first lady has not ruled out the idea.

Though close aides and confidants say she is not actively considering the Senate bid, there are growing signs of a whisper campaign to encourage speculation as Mrs. Clinton enjoys some of her highest approval ratings ever.



Clinton

"She's aware that people are speculating about what she might do in 2000, but at this point she has no plans to run for elective office," said spokeswoman Marsha Berry. "For the

next two years, she wants to make the most out of being first lady. I'm not in the position to rule it out. I'm just telling you I can't tell you."

Judith Hope, chairwoman of the New York Democratic Party, said Mrs. Clinton asked her several

months ago not to encourage speculation about running for the seat of retiring Democratic Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan. She told The Associated Press she had no reason to believe the guidance had changed. "I would be surprised if this is what she chose to do," Hope said Thursday.

A few hours later, she called back to say, "I have reason to believe that my comments have been too negative. If she decides to run, it would be terribly thrilling. ... I have reason to believe this possibility has not been ruled out." Hope would not say what prompted her to view a Hillary-for-Senate campaign in a less negative light.

WIRELESS: New technology tested

Continued from 1A

system Thursday.

"It gives you basically anytime, anywhere access," said Sumi Helal, an associate professor of computer and information science and engineering. Some predict the wireless technology will be common in a decade.

During the demonstration, held in a fourth-floor conference room in UF's computer science building, Helal looked at slides on a Discovery Channel home page, checked his e-mail and showed off the technology that will allow students to work without a wire.

The system allows users with the specially-equipped computers to connect to the Internet without a modem or computer cable. A PC card, connected to a radio chip and plugged into the computer, exchanges signals with nearby "access points," which are small transmission antennas, Helal said. The access points, in turn, will be placed in the computer engineering building.

For the trial, UF will lend the specially-equipped IBM laptops to about 20 students. In the class, professors say, students will examine the system's practicality, its quickness and determine if it poses any security problems.

If the test period goes well, UF will spread the technology to other classes and other buildings, said Gerhard Ritter, CISE department chairman. Ritter sees the technology changing the way people use



MARIANNA MASSEY/Special to The Sun

UF President John Lombardi tries out a wireless computer Thursday.

their computers.

"Nobody likes to be tied to wires," he said, adding that the chips will allow students to tap into the university supercomputers.

The system will have uses inside the home, too, professors said. The chip sets will allow several people under one roof to use a computer, "You can do as much computing as you want, and you don't have to tie up a telephone line," Ritter said. "It gives you this real freedom."

Harris Corp., a Melbourne-based communications company, and Nortel Networks are donating the wireless equipment. Ron Van Dell,

Harris vice president and general manager for communication products, said the chip sets now cost less than \$300. A year ago, he added, the sets cost twice that price, and by the end of 1999, the price will fall below \$200.

One of the students who will soon get to use the technology said he was impressed. "Cool," said computer engineering graduate student Roy Munson.

Like Ritter, Munson also predicted the technology would spread. "It should be pretty commonplace maybe 10, 15 years down the road," he said.

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