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Former UA professor Vernon L. Smith, one of two Americans awarded the Nobel Prize for economics yesterday, left for George Mason University last year.

Former prof wins Nobel Prize

25-years of economic research at UA pay off 1 year after relocating

BY REBEKAH JAMPOLE
Staff Writer

For nearly five decades, Vernon Smith's colleagues paid little attention to his idea of experimental economics, but his patience paid off yesterday when the very same concept won him the Nobel Prize for Economics.

Smith, a former UA professor who now teaches economics and law at George Mason University and Daniel Kahneman, director of public affairs at Princeton University, will share a the \$1 million award for their work in behavioral economics — the inte-

gration of psychology and economics.

Using the two areas of research, they analyzed human judgement and decision-making under uncertainty, the Royal Academy of Sciences that awards the Nobel Prize said in its citation.

Smith taught at UA from 1975-2001 and founded the Economic Science Laboratory on campus. But he left UA last year after George Mason University offered more space and funding for his research.

The research developed "wind-tunnel" tests in which trials of new, alternative market designs, such as a deregulated electricity market, are done in a lab before being implemented. Scientists can now rely more on controlled laboratory experi-

ments rather than observation of actual economies.

Smith's theories prove that markets do not need many buyers and sellers to operate effectively.

"He has been the lone pioneer for a long time. It (the prize) is very well-deserved — he's a very creative guy," said Mark Walker, head of the economics department.

Smith first got the "germ" of the idea in the '1950's, when he was a graduate student at Harvard University.

At the time, other economists were skeptical of the concept of experimental economics, Walker said. It was not until Smith came to the UA that he truly began to establish a research foundation.

Smith plans to donate his

award money to the International Foundation for Research in Experimental Economics, which he founded in 1997.

The Bank of Sweden established the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel in 1968.

Since the prize was first awarded in 1969, 34 of the 51 recipients have been from the United States.

The Nobel Prize in chemistry was also awarded yesterday. The award for literature will be announced today, followed by the Nobel Prize for peace on Friday.

Smith will receive his award on Dec. 10, the 106th anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death.

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UA speeds virus research while West Nile nears

BY STEPHANIE SCHWARTZ
Staff Writer

Birds and mosquitoes carrying the West Nile virus may be headed for Tucson and four UA researchers are learning everything they can to stop them.

Preliminary test results yesterday showed two Arizona residents who had returned from trips out of state were infected with the virus.

The researchers are from various departments, including entomology, and are working to prevent the spread of the virus to Arizona.

Although not usually fatal to humans, four people died from the West Nile virus in Louisiana earlier this year. Across the nation, 22 people have died from the virus since

1999, although many more were infected.

The researchers are looking to find which mosquitoes are here in Tucson, where they are and whom they are biting, said entomology professor Henry Hagedorn.

"We're also looking for mosquitoes that bite humans and birds," Hagedorn said. "Those will likely be the ones to transfer (the virus) to us."

The virus is a disease for mosquitoes and birds, and only occasionally affects humans. Bird migration in the winter spreads the disease from the East Coast to the rest of the country. Because Arizona is an important route for migrating birds, the arrival of the

See WEST NILE, Page 6

Student senators may get behind the wheel

To save money, senators consider driving for the SafeRide escort service

BY NATE BUCHIK
Staff Writer

Student government senators may take a turn at the wheel of SafeRide cars in order to cut costs and get in more office hours.

At the weekly ASUA senate meeting last night, director of SafeRide Sharjeel Durrani proposed a plan to have senators drive for the free transportation escort service instead of carrying out their regular office hours outside every week.

While the plan is in early

stages, senators were interested in the idea that would save SafeRide money and give senators another way to converse with students about problems at UA.

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The student senate of shelled out \$1,000 for student groups' upcoming conferences and a competition.

The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers got \$350 to register for a contest in Texas and the Student Organization of North America was allotted the same amount for a plane ticket to attend a conference in Calgary, Canada.

The Honors Student Council

See ASUA, Page 8



Dan Caffarel, psychology junior and Army ROTC cadet, tries to keep his gun dry while treading water in the Student Recreation Center swimming pool yesterday. The lab trains cadets in how to survive emergency water situations.

Training cadets to live

BY LAURA MALAMUD
Staff writer

Most students were still sleeping at 6 a.m. yesterday, but not Army ROTC cadets. They were preparing to be pushed, fully clothed and with shoes on, into a swimming pool.

About 40 students, dressed in camouflage, anxiously awaited orders from their commanding

officers on the pool deck before jumping into the annual water survival training course where they practiced water skills needed for combat.

"This is a lab focused on water confidence, getting people to swim with their equipment, strengthening their swimming and teaching them how to make floating devices," said Cadet Battalion Commander

Aimee Hemery, a psychology senior.

Students were pushed off bleachers blindfolded in order to simulate a surprise encounter with water.

The other events used load-bearing equipment, like a plastic gun the same weight as a regular gun, in order to show how

See SWIM, Page 6