

## Rat Wins Titles as Champion

COSTA MESA (AP) — Leona Pasley's pet Robert — her pride and joy — is well, he's got really pretty pink eyes.

And he's, he's really affectionate and has won a lot of prizes. And he's never bitten — not once.

And he's so clean. He's really clean. If you could just get to know him.

Well, let's not mince words: Robert is a rat.

But not just any rat. He is not the junkyard variety — the black rat or *Rattus rarus*. Robert (named after Robert Redford for his blond beauty) is a 1½ pound brown rat or *Rattus norvegicus*. He was bred to be a star on the show circuit of the American Fancy Rat and Mouse Association, which has about 200 members, about a third in Orange and San Diego counties.

In his short career, he has brought home honors in the categories of Standard Rat, Best-of-Show Rat and Best Self rat, meaning one-color critters. Those victories have earned him Grand Champion Rat titles twice in seven months this year.

Honors have to come quickly in the show-rat business. Rats like Robert seldom live longer than three years. Their beauty flowers during a brief, six-month period beginning with their first birthday. After that, it's all downhill.

For that reason, association shows are frequent, but the rats with Robert's pedigree can pick and choose. He will give this month's show a pass and wait for the January show, said Ms. Pasley, vice



BEAUTY IS IN EYES OF THE BEHOLDER  
Robert the rat is admired by Leona Pasley.

president of the organization.

Still, he is no show-in, she conceded. Already he's beginning to loose it.

Once the rat ideal of slender head, racy torso, big ears, big eyes and a tail as long or longer than his body, Robert's coat "is getting a bit rough, and he's getting a little beefy in the face."

Soon he'll retire to stud in the west bedroom of Ms. Pasley's house in Costa Mesa, where he is just one of her 42 rats, not including the 29

babies born this month. There are bound to be champions among them, Pasley said.

"I raise them to show, so I keep different color variations. I have pearls, cinnamon pearls, cinnamons. I have English Irish — which is a marking rather than a color. I have champagnes. I have beiges, I have the black-eye white."

The best of them can sell for as much as \$10 at a show, she said. "I don't really raise them to make a big profit. I breed rats because I like

them, I don't want people to be afraid of them.

"They're a much better pet than hamsters. They're much more reliable. They don't bite. They're very intelligent. They're affectionate. They don't do any damage around the house. I think they're the perfect pet."

Yet, she concedes, if you call someone a rat, there's a chance he'll feel insulted.

"And that's terrible. They should say, 'That person's a hamster.'"

## Successful Launch Keeps U.S. Space Recovery on Track

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — America's most powerful unmanned rocket had its second-consecutive success by launching a spy satellite, and officials called the latest flight a major step in restoring the nation's space program.

The satellite launched toward a stationary 22,300-mile-high orbit Saturday night by a \$65 million, 16-story-tall Titan 34D rocket was not identified by the Air Force.

But John E. Pike, a space policy expert for the Federation of American Scientists in Washington, said it is one of a series intended to provide up to 30 minutes warning of an all-out nuclear attack.

The launch continued the U.S. rebound from last year's space failures, and improved the Pentagon's chances of orbiting a backlog more than 30 vital military satellites, officials said.

It was the second-straight success for the Titan 34D, which was grounded by the explosion of a Titan in April 1986 at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. A redesigned version of the rocket carrying a reconnaissance satellite blasted off from Vandenberg last month.

Without the Titan 34D and with the space shuttle grounded by last year's Challenger explosion, the Air Force had been unable to orbit heavy military payloads, which have been accumulating.

The satellites are needed to monitor compliance with the nuclear arms agreement to be signed next week by President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, as well as for reconnaissance, communications, navigation and communications interception.

Another U.S. rocket, the Delta, also was grounded for months last year by a failure but has resumed flights. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration plans to resume shuttle flights next June.

Air Force Secretary Edward C. Aldridge called the back-to-back Titan successes major steps in America's space launch recovery, and said they "demonstrate our operational launch capability from both the East and West coasts . . . and emphasize our confidence in the Titan launch system and its ability to launch critical national security payloads."

"We are really back in business now," said Col. Lawrence L. Gooch, commander of the Eastern Space and Missile Center, which includes the Cape Canaveral launch area, site of Saturday night's blastoff.

"The dry spell is over," Gooch said. "We have momentum again. We're going to be very busy here from now on."

In addition to Titan 34Ds, new rockets like the Delta 2 and Titan 4 will make their debuts here next year to launch backlogged military payloads.

When manned space shuttles began flying early in this decade, NASA and the Pentagon decided to phase out unmanned rockets and put all their eggs in one basket, the shuttle.

Even before the January 1986 Challenger explosion, the Air Force decided it needed these rockets as a backup for defense payloads in case something happened to the shuttle.

It asked Martin Marietta to develop the new Titan 4, a more powerful version of the Titan 34D. Since Challenger, the Air Force has ordered additional Titan 4s, bringing the total to 27. The service is seeking money for 25 more.

The Air Force also has ordered seven Delta 2s, with options on 13 more and is refurbishing 13 obsolete Titan 2 intercontinental missiles to serve as boosters.

The Challenger accident also prompted NASA to plan to use scores of unmanned rockets

## Ex-General Denies Corruption

## Korea Vote Fraud Charged

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Opposition leaders are charging the government with waging a huge campaign of bribes, phony votes and other dishonest tactics to win the first presidential elections in 16 years.

Opposition presidential candidates contend government candidate Roh Tae-woo's only chance of winning the Dec. 16 election is through fraud and have made the accusations a key part of their campaigns.

"Roh Tae-woo, no matter how many candidates there are in the election, could not be elected in a free and fair election," said Kim Dae-jung, a top opposition candidate.

Opposition leaders claim the government is mobilizing all its officials and workers to aid the campaign of the governing Democratic Justice Party.

"If key figures in the administration are engaged in illicit campaigns, an irrevocably serious situation will be created," said Kim Young-sam, the other top opposition candidate.

Roh, a former general who is campaigning on the platform of giving South Korea full democracy, has repeatedly denied the corruption charges and said they are character assassination.

"I am really concerned that the elections are becoming a hotbed of black propaganda and personal slanders," he said.

Opposition party officials, however, allege government supporters will be allowed to cast multiple votes, dead people are being registered to vote and officials will intentionally miscount ballots.

The opposition also has accused the government of handing out bribes to voters, of using government and police officials to gather votes for Roh and of using the state-owned television networks to boost his campaign.

But the opposition has given little proof to back up its claims.

U.S. officials and other foreign observers say recent legislative elections were relatively fair and honest.

The opposition also contends the 650,000 members of the armed forces will be instructed to vote for Roh or senior officers will cast the votes for them.

"The ruling party must stop its wicked plans and get ready for fair elections," said spokesman Kim Hyung-rae of the opposition Reunification Democratic Party.

The opposition has been reading plans for "fair election watch

groups" to ensure honest voting. Students will check election rosters for multiple registrations or registration of the dead as "ghost votes." They also plan to conduct voter education courses.

Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam both released copies of what they said were government instructions to provincial officials on gaining votes for Roh. The documents told officials to buy people meals and visit or phone them at home to urge them to vote for Roh.

"It shows the ruling party intends to continue its illegal campaign tactics. We view the situation with grave concern," Kim Hyung-rae said.

The Home Ministry, which was alleged to have issued the plan, dismissed it as a forgery and denied the government was using dishonest tactics.

Election fraud was used extensively by South Korea's first president, Syngman Rhee, to stay in power before he was toppled by a popular uprising in 1960. There also were allegations that former strongman President Park Chung-hee rigged elections.

No front runner has emerged in the current campaign race. Most observers agree that Roh and the two Kims are probably running neck-and-neck. The government bans opinion polls on how the candidates are faring.

The opposition was split when the two Kims both insisted on running for president despite widespread concern they would boost Roh's election chances.

Opposition leaders have repeatedly demanded that President Chun Doo-hwan give up power to allow formation of a neutral interim government to ensure fair elections.

Chun, a former general who picked Roh, has rejected the demand for a neutral government. He said he will stay until his term ends Feb. 25, and he pledged to ensure fair elections.

Chun bowed to demands for the first direct presidential elections in 16 years after massive anti-government protests in June.

International human rights groups are expected to send observers to help monitor the elections. A team of 21 observers, including congressional aides, is expected from the United States.

## Dollar Plunges to New Lows

LONDON (AP) — The U.S. dollar plummeted in hectic European trading today, trading at record lows against the West German mark and Japanese yen and a 5½-year low against the British pound.

Gold prices surged above \$480 dollars an ounce in both London and Zurich for the first time since January 1983 and there was speculation it might break through the \$500-an-ounce level during the day.

Foreign currency dealers said there were no fresh reasons for the dollar's plunge, but they remained pessimistic about its immediate trend in the absence of favorable news that could move it higher.

"It's just the same old story, the deficit, the lack of leadership (in the United States)," said one dealer at a U.S. bank in Frankfurt. "There isn't any support for the dollar."

The dollar's slide began in Asia where, despite repeated intervention by Japan's central bank, the dollar plummeted to another record low in Tokyo, closing at 132.45 yen compared with Friday's close of 133.75 yen. In later London trading it was quoted at 132.10 yen.

Dealers in Italy said the market was waiting to see what action West Germany may take in the next few days to stabilize currency markets.

At mid-morning, the dollar was trading at 1.63525 West German marks, a record post-World War II low. It was quoted at 1.6540 late Friday.

German leaders have said they would let their economy act as a locomotive for others, said a trader in Milan.

"Now it's time for the Germans to follow words with actions."

West German Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg said last week that his government would do more to stimulate its economy.

In London, the dollar was trading at its lowest level against the British pound since May 1982. It cost \$1.8305 to buy one pound, more expensive than late Friday's \$1.8105.

Gold surged between \$14 and \$15 an ounce in both London and Zurich in response to the dollar's new decline.

At mid-morning today, London's five major bullion dealers fixed a recommended price of \$493 dollars a troy ounce compared with late Friday's \$478.80.

In Zurich, the bid price was \$492.50 dollars an ounce, up from \$478.50 late Friday.

"The market has some steam up," said one London bullion dealer. Gold was trading as high as \$495 dollars an ounce in London at one point and another dealer said he saw a "very strong possibility" it would crack through the \$500 level during the day.

Earlier, in Hong Kong, gold rose \$3.11 an ounce to close at a bid \$489.51.

Silver was quoted in London today at a bid price of \$7.25 a troy ounce, up from Friday's \$7.06.

## Police Arrest Woman Sought in Kidnap, Murder

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A woman sought for months by police in the kidnapping and shooting of two San Fernando Valley teen-agers has been captured and booked for investigation of murder in the slaying of one girl, police said.

Marsha Lynn Erickson, 33, was arrested in North Hollywood Friday evening by homicide investigators, police Lt. Linda Healy said Saturday. She didn't resist arrest and she wasn't armed, the lieutenant said.



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Virginia Tooper advances remarks to get a laugh and for self-defense.

## Sarcasm Requires Care

## Group Promotes Sneering Retorts

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Here's some absolutely fascinating news: A former college professor turned humor consultant is promoting a group for wisecrackers called Sarcasms Anonymous.

Yeah, it's a real important organization.

Virginia Tooper says a comedian hatched a similar idea years ago, but "he's dead now." So, she decided to start her own group dedicated to the advancement of sneering remarks.

This year, three years after quietly establishing Sarcasms Anonymous as a fertile source of jokes for her seminars and speeches, Tooper has decided to bring the organization out of the closet.

"There's Overeaters Anonymous, Messies Anonymous, even Procrastinators Anonymous — they're working on plans for their 1982 convention right now. Why not Sarcasms Anonymous?" she asks.

Sarcasm, she says, has become more cutting than ever judging by the response of her audiences and 300 members, who get cards, a newsletter and an enamel pin for joining.

Tooper divides the world's sarcasms into three groups: those who have been blatantly sarcastic and are "trying to take it one day at a time"; those who revel in their sarcasm; and "sarc-anons," who must live and work with sarcasms.

Tooper puts herself among the first, while acknowledging that sarcasm is good in limited doses.

"I'm a recovering sarcastic," she says with no lack of irony. "But once a sarcastic, always a sarcastic. You can only hope to keep it under control."

Oh, great. Fabulous advice.

Tooper says she was raised in a cold, humorless family and had the kind of painful childhood that sar-

castic personalities often are founded upon.

Badly in need of humor and warmth, she developed sarcasm to get a laugh and use as a weapon against those who poked fun of her for being overweight. It was effective, but also made her conclude that one must be careful about how to use it or risk losing friends.

"For three straight summers in Girl Scout camp, I was voted the wittiest and the biggest dumb bunny," she says. "The fourth year I quit."

Tooper went on to get a doctorate in special education and counselor education, which she taught at San Jose State University before leaving in 1979.

In her 50s now and based in Pleasanton, 35 miles east of San Francisco, she lectures to corporations, organizations and colleges on the uses of humor on and off the job.

Marriages can be destroyed by sarcasm, she cautions, but hers in corporates it.

Her husband, Edward, an engineer, is a master of irony. Disgruntled with her cooking, he once spray-painted some of her freshly cooked meatballs gold and hung them on the Christmas tree, she said.

Of course, there is a time when sarcasm goes over like a lead meatball. Tooper advocates the use of "safe sarcasm," in which those who are its target enjoy it.

"Never use sarcasm with someone at your office who is sitting on your promotions evaluation committee," she says. "Never use visual sarcasm — giving 'the bird' — with someone on the freeway whose car is in worse shape than yours.

"And never use sarcasm with people who are at your mercy, such as young children."

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