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TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2001

**Late Sports Final**

# TRUMP SELECTS LOCAL ARCHITECT

**SKIDMORE, OWINGS  
& MERRILL TO  
DESIGN TOWER AT  
SUN-TIMES SITE**

BY LEWIS LAZARE  
BUSINESS REPORTER

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, one of the city's most high-profile architectural firms, will design the new structure to go up on the site of the Chicago Sun-Times Building at 401 N. Wabash.

SOM is the choice of developer Donald Trump, who said he will work closely with Skidmore design partner Adrian Smith on the new building, expected to be called Trump Tower Chicago.

□ Details, Page 6

## Chicago residents smell a rat

BY FRAN SPIELMAN  
CITY HALL REPORTER

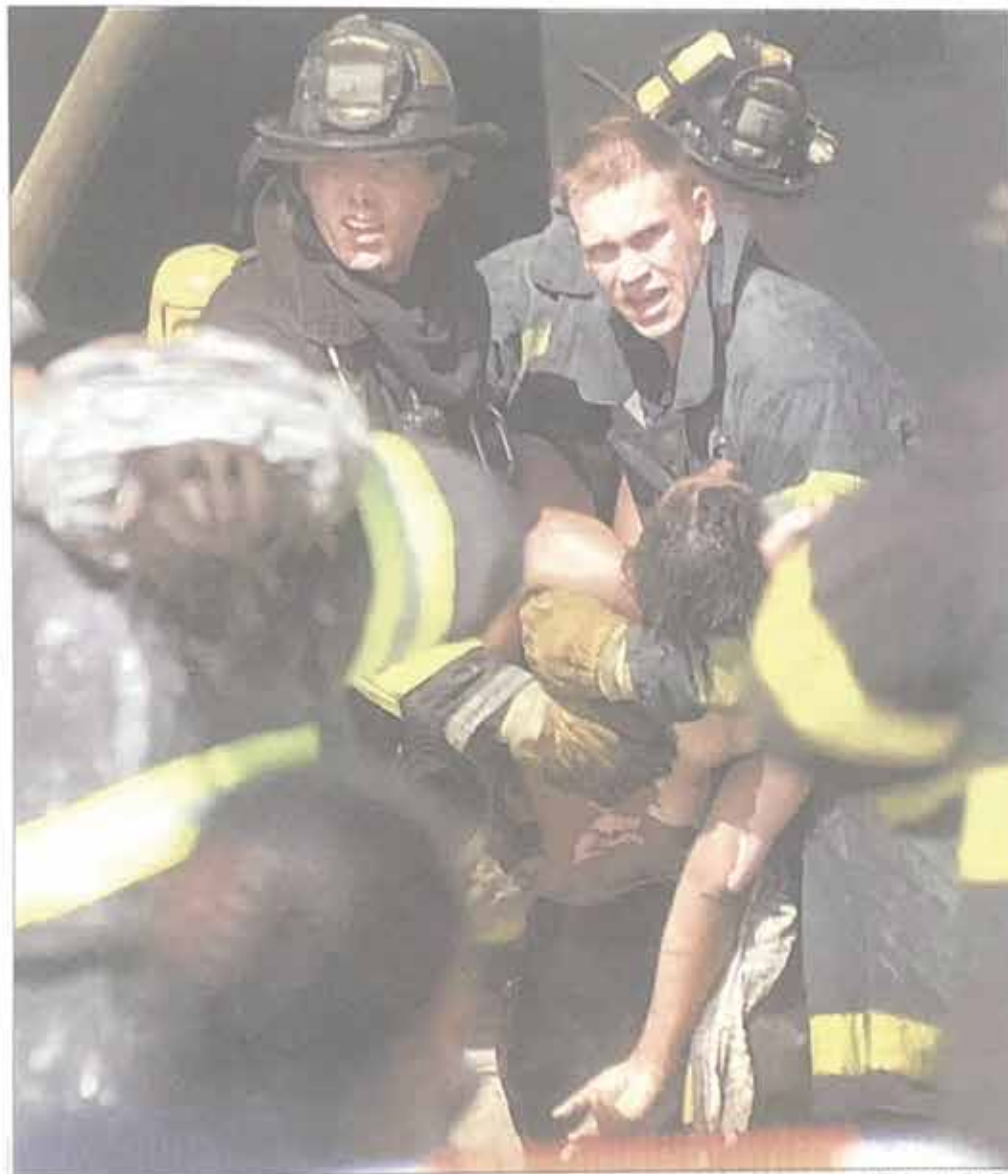
Rat sightings in Chicago are up 26 percent—to 10,089 for the first six months of this year—but that doesn't mean the city's rat population is exploding, City Hall said Monday.

In fact, the Daley administration insists that the number of rats calling Chicago home is holding steady at 500,000. More calls simply mean more people are rat-watching, officials said.

Through June 30, City Hall had received 33,134 rat-related complaints, up from 22,431 for the first six months of 2000. Of those calls, 10,089 were actual rodent sightings, up from 7,993 sightings

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## TRAGEDY AT THE CHA



Firefighters Kelly Burns (left) and John Sostak carry out a woman Monday morning after a fifth-floor apartment caught fire at the Harold Ickes housing development, 2310 S. State. One child died and 14 people were injured. Investigators say children playing with matches started the blaze. Details, Page 8.

JEAN LACOMTE/SUN-TIMES

## Stem cells used to treat Crohn's

BY ART GOLAR  
SCARY REPORTER

The first stem-cell transplant to treat Crohn's disease appears to be working, said a doctor at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, where the procedure was performed 10 weeks ago.

The results were encouraging enough that the hospital performed a second transplant on a 16-year-old boy Monday.

The first patient, 22-year-old Joy Weiss, who lives near Bangor, Maine, had suffered from Crohn's disease since she was a child. Her white blood cells were assaulting her digestive system as if they were an invading army of infectious bacteria.

"My body rejects my stomach and there's nothing I can do," Weiss told her hometown newspaper, the Bangor Daily News, before the transplant.

Many with the autoimmune disorder live relatively normal lives. For others, it can be fatal.

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## Clinton's record book advance

Published reports say ex-president to get more than \$10 million advance for memoirs, Page 18

# Cell

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Weiss' disease, which affects more than 50,000 Americans, had progressed to the point where she had to have morphine pumped into her spine to control the pain. Another line carried nutrients into her bloodstream because she was unable to digest food. She had also endured chronic diarrhea, her weight was down to 80 pounds and she faced a colostomy.

"We've been in and out of hospitals so many times, it's a blur," said her mother, Barbara, who is a registered nurse.

But after the stem cell transplant, her Crohn's symptoms have gone and her digestive system appears to be recovering, said Dr. Richard Burt, who performed the procedure.

"She's failed everything out there that's available, and now two and a half months after the transplant, she's had no diarrhea and no abdominal pain," said Burt, who is chief of the hospi-

tal's division of Immune Therapy and Autoimmune Diseases.

"It's gone as good as we could have wished for so far," he said.

Weiss' procedure involved the use of her own body's blood stem cells, which are different from the more controversial embryonic stem cells.

Embryonic stem cells can potentially grow any type of cells, such as those that make up heart, lung and brain tissue. Blood stem cells can be building blocks only for cells that circulate through the blood, such as white blood cells that attack infections.

Weiss' own stem cells could be used to grow new cells for her immune system—hopefully ones that would not attack her own body.

But first her faulty immune system had to be destroyed, using powerful chemotherapy drugs. Then stem cells that had been previously removed from Weiss were injected back into her bloodstream.

They "headed home" to the bone marrow and immediately began producing new immune system cells, Burt said.

The most dangerous period was the two weeks before Weiss' new immune system began to take hold, when she had to be kept in sterile conditions to avoid exposure to an infection she had no power to fight against. In rare cases that period can prove fatal, but the worst Weiss suffered was a couple of days of fever.

Burt describes the process as a way of resetting the immune system.

"A lot of these people weren't born this way; they spend 20 to 40 years of their life without anything happening," he said. "So what we're doing is just letting it start back over as if they were re-born."

It's too soon to say whether the process is even a possible cure. But similar procedures have been used successfully to treat another autoimmune disease, lupus.

Burt has also had promising results treating multiple sclerosis with a similar process.

In the case of Crohn's disease, "We would have to follow a patient for at least five years," Burt said.