

bridges have been carved up. Rebuilding could cost more than \$3 billion by some estimates.

Along with Beirut, places facing the longest road to recovery are towns like Maroun al-Ras. The tiny enclave sits on a hill with views of an Israeli kibbutz on a neighboring rise just a short hike away.

It was here that Hezbollah fighters staged their first showdown with Israeli tanks that punched into southern Lebanon to rout the militants.

Eight Israeli soldiers died here, and the evidence of street battles, airstrikes and artillery barrages is everywhere.

A decomposing cow, its skull visible, lies on one street. Jagged shrapnel litters the roads. Apartment z

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By *Kevin Clerici*  
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By dusk, the Crooked Hat Drummers were at full throttle, banging their drum covered in buffalo hide and chanting honor songs as onlookers bowed their heads and nodded silently to the beat.

Members of the Saticoy Chumash Youth, some as young as 6, their fresh faces spotted with white tribal paint, sang joyfully, shook rattles and clapped with feathers in their hands.

Nearly 300 people gathered in downtown Ventura on Tuesday evening to launch a 20-month celebration of San Buenaventura Mission's 225th anniversary.

There may be older and larger missions in California (San Buenaventura was the ninth built of 21), but the historic church remains a defining and enduring landmark.

"This is the mother church in Ventura County," said Sister Rachel Yourgules, principal at the

See BUENAVENTURA on A6



Bishop Thomas Curry, second from left, leads the processional to San Buenaventura Mission in downtown Ventura on Tuesday. The church, the last founded by Father Junipero Serra, will celebrate its 225th anniversary on March 31, 2008. It serves 2,800 to 3,000 families.

Online extra

Log on to [www.VenturaCountyStar.com](http://www.VenturaCountyStar.com) for links to groups dedicated to the preservation of California's missions.

In 2004, President signed a law authorizing million in federal funds spent to restore California's missions. That law was immediately challenged by the organization Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. The lawsuit was dropped last year because Congress never appropriated the money.

This year, state Sen. Maldonado, R-Santa Barbara, sought to resolve the state's problem by proposing an amendment to the California Constitution that would have allowed tax money to be spent for "the preservation of any of the 21 California missions, provided that the preservation is for the benefit of

See MISSIONS

## Free Ojai house may prove costly

By **Tony Biasotti**

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Jeff Weinstein has a common problem: There's already a house on the lot in Ojai where he wants to build his dream house. The common solution would be to tear down the old house.

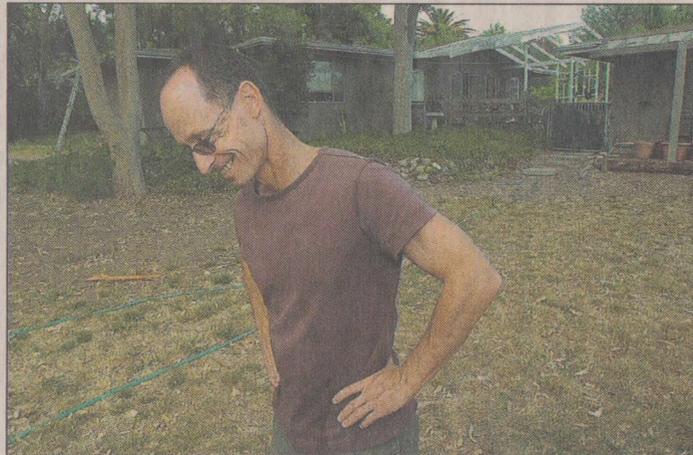
But Weinstein, an architect and environmentalist who lives in Santa Monica, says it pains him to destroy a perfectly good house and dump the remains in a landfill. He's taking the uncommon step of trying to save the house and give it to a charity or anyone else with the space to take it and the capability to move it.

"My first preference is to give it to a charity, but I'll give it to whoever will take it," he said.

Giving away his house is turning out to be a tough sell. Anyone who accepts the house has to have property that's zoned for it, about \$20,000 to have it moved, and \$50,000 to build a new foundation, and install power and water, Weinstein said.

The recipient also has to be in the Ojai area.

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Rob Varela / Star staff

"You're getting a house for nothing, but you have to have a lot to take it," Jeff Weinstein says. The house he is giving away sits on an Ojai lot, but the taker will have to pay the cost of moving it to a new location.

## New definition of planet may add 3 to sun's system

By **William J. Kole**

*The Associated Press*

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — The universe really is expanding: Astronomers are proposing to rewrite the textbooks to say that our solar system has 12 planets rather than the nine memorized by generations of schoolchildren.

Much-maligned Pluto would remain a planet and its largest moon plus two other heavenly bodies would join Earth's neighborhood under a draft resolution to be formally presented today to the International Astronomical Union, the arbiter of what is and isn't a planet.

"Yes, Virginia, Pluto is a planet," quipped Richard Binzel, a professor of

planetary science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The proposal could change, however: Binzel and the other nearly 500 astronomers from 75 nations met in Prague to hammer out a uniform definition of a planet will hold brainstorming sessions before voting on the resolution next week. The draft comes from the IAU's working committee, which only submitted recommendations likely to get two-thirds approval from the group.

Besides reaffirming the status of puny Pluto — whose detractors argue that it shouldn't be a planet — the new lineup would include 2003 UB31

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British police detain a new suspect in the alleged plot to blow up jetliners. A9

47¢ plus tax

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check on their clothing store. Nearly 1,000 Hezbollah rockets had slammed into Kiryat Shemona during the fighting, making the town the biggest Israeli target in the confrontation.

Dozens of buildings were hit, scores of people were wounded, the surrounding hillsides were set ablaze and most of the town's 22,000 residents fled. But the intense rocket barrage did little destruction compared with what took place at Maroun al-Ras, and on Tuesday, Kiryat Shemona was quickly regaining a sense of normalcy.

Traffic lights on the main street set to blink orange for weeks resumed their red-green alternation. Stores reopened. Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni traveled throughout the area

free motel rooms for hundreds of people whose homes were destroyed.

Reconstruction is expected to begin soon.

Feelings of abandonment

"It is our obligation to help the citizens," Livni said during a stop in Kiryat Shemona.

But that's not enough for the Levys, who, like many in the north, feel that they were abandoned by their government during the fighting.

"I was really ashamed of our government," said Kobi Levy, who was called back to military service as a medic.

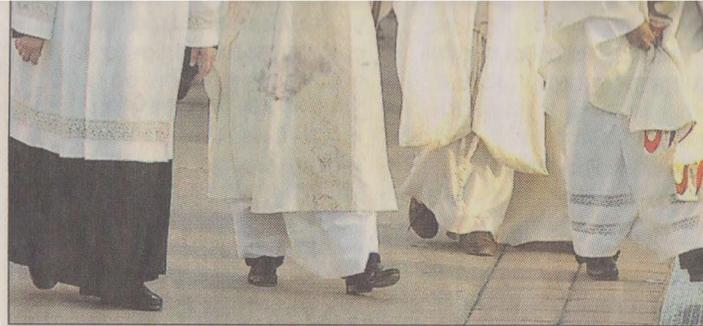
When the rebuilding will start in Maroun al-Ras is anyone's guess. There's doubt that many of those returning to southern Lebanon will stay long.

on a three-block procession to the mission for a special bilingual Mass celebrating the Feast of the Assumption.

To Cole, co-chairman of the mission's anniversary committee, Tuesday's festivities were about more than a renewal of the mission. The group plans to hold spiritual and open house events through March 31, 2008. And if it helps raise money for structural improvements, particularly the aging museum, well, that's fine, too.

"We hope this will not only be a celebration, but will spark a community conversation across faiths and across ethnic lines about the proud and tragic histories of all the many people that have called Ventura home over the last 225 years," Cole said.

Indeed, in Tuesday's short



Rob Varela / Star staff

Bishop Thomas Curry, second from left, leads a procession to San Buenaventura Mission in downtown Ventura on Tuesday evening for a special bilingual Mass celebrating the Feast of the Assumption.

walk from a former Chumash farm to the church, parishioners walked over fertile ground that was once home to native tribes, a former Mexican-American neighborhood split up when the

interstate was constructed, and China Alley, home to early Chinese pioneers.

"The history of the mission is very important, and it's important that we carry it forward,"

counter in 1769 between native coastal Chumash and the Franciscan priests and Spanish soldiers who had set out from northern Mexico to colonize the area.

The Franciscan priests decided that it would be a great place for a mission, but it took 13 years before Serra returned to erect a cross and dedicate its creation. Work on the church building was not completed until Sept. 9, 1809.

Miguel Llamas, 47, of Oxnard prays for its future.

"I have been to many churches, but it wasn't until I found the mission that I felt like I was part of a larger community," said Llamas, an usher at Sunday's 7:30 a.m. Mass. "It's hard to describe, but the mission feels like home. It brings people together."

# Cost of moving Ojai home could be prohibitive, experts say

## FREE HOUSE

From A1

Weinstein said he's spoken to professional house movers who told him that it would be prohibitively expensive, and perhaps impossible, to move the house down the winding roads that connect Ojai to the rest of the county.

"The opportunities are certainly limited," Weinstein said.

Taking the house still would be cheaper than building a new one. A 1,500-square-foot house like the one Weinstein is trying to give away would cost more than \$200,000 in labor and materials to build, he said.

The existing house was built in 1956. It has three bedrooms and two bathrooms, and is a typical example of the postwar California style known as the



Star staff

ranch house.

It shows its 50 years, but Weinstein said it's in perfectly livable condition, and it was custom-built by a local architect. "It's a step above a tract house,"

he said.

He's pitched the house to nearly every church in town, thinking that it would make a perfect home for a pastor. The churches have all said no, either because they don't have the money to move the house or they don't have space that's zoned for a residential dwelling.

If he can't find a taker by Oct. 1, he'll have to tear down the house. He needs to start building his new home in the fall if he's going to meet his goal of moving in by September 2007.

Love at first sight

Weinstein, 52, is married and has two young children. In 1997, he visited Ojai for the first time, and decided on the spot that he had to live there.

"I just fell in love with Ojai,"

he said. "I came up here every weekend for a year looking for something to buy."

Eventually, he found the property on Montana Road, close to the intersection of Highways 150 and 33, and just outside the Ojai city limits. Like most of the homes in the area, his is on about an acre of land and surrounded by trees.

Since then, he's rented the house to a series of tenants, waiting for the right time to move his family to Ojai.

He's decided next year will be that time. Weinstein has designed a 2,500-square-foot house for the property, with one of the trees standing in an atrium in the middle of the home.

"My kids will be able to ride their bikes to school," Weinstein said. "You just can't do that any-

more in Santa Monica."

House moving is extremely rare in Ventura County. Jim MacDonald, a manager in the county's Building and Safety Department, said he's only seen three or four moves in the eight years he's worked for the county.

"I think years ago it was more common," he said. "When you really look at the cost to move a house, it can get very expensive, and many times it's not worth it unless you're trying to maintain a vintage architectural style."

Permits needed

Someone who wants to move a house also has to get a stack of permits, MacDonald said. First, the owners of the property where the house is being installed need all the permits they would need if a new house were

being built there, and they must pay all the fees that a new-home builder would pay.

They would also need permission to move the house along public roads on an oversized truck. That means permits from the county, if the house travels through unincorporated areas; permits from the California Department of Transportation, if it uses a state highway, and permits from any city it passes through. Southern California Edison might also charge the mover if the company has to move power lines to accommodate the house.

"You're getting a house for nothing, but you have to have a lot to take it," Weinstein said.

Anyone interested in the house can contact Weinstein at 1-310-795-0652.