



Governor's Mansion
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor Mike Beebe
Senator Henry Wilkins, Co-chair, Legislative Council
Representative Allen Maxwell, Co-chair, Legislative Council

FROM: Wayne Cranford, Chairman, and Governor's Mansion Commission
Ron Maxwell, Administrator, Governor's Mansion

SUBJ: Annual Mansion Report

DATE: October 30, 2009

Within the past year, the Arkansas Governor's Mansion has been the scene of many official special events, dinners, receptions, private functions, and family gatherings. More than 25,000 people from around the state, nation, and world have been greeted by the Governor and First Lady, including the ambassadors from China, France, Egypt, and Singapore, as well as people from all walks of life: leaders in business and industry, entertainers, writers, educators, high-school scholars and all manner of Arkansans. Many have taken tours of the historic Mansion, enjoyed fine dining and special entertainment, and strolled through the extensive landscaped gardens. The Mansion has also been the venue for raising countless thousands of dollars for nonprofits and charitable organization in the state.

Continued preservation and upgrades to this historic state property make it a comfortable and hospitable place for official entertaining. Pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 22-3-805, the 2009 annual report of the Governor's Mansion Commission on the general condition of the Mansion complex, grounds, and appurtenant buildings is contained in the following information:

Historic Mansion - Several enhancements, to both the public and private rooms of the Governor's Mansion, have been added in the last year. Those improvements include the following:

- The installation of a new, dark blue indoor/outdoor carpet runner and brass rods on the brick front steps to improve the appeal of the formal entrance to the Mansion. This also is a safety feature for guests to better define the elevation of the steps.
- A new decorator-designed ten-foot in diameter, round wool rug in the foyer. Featured in the center of the rug is the official seal of the State of Arkansas to welcome visitors. This rug was paid for by private donations to the nonprofit Governor Mansion Association.
- Installation of a new Kitchen Aid double-convection oven in the Mansion's private kitchen.
- Installation of a new wooden cabinet, sink, and counter top in the small foyer powder room.

- Refinishing of a partner's desk in the formal living room, along with the placement of a glass-top cover there. A glass covering was also added to the large round meeting table in the library.
- Replacement of Heat Pump #6 in the Mansion attic that services the Governor's master bathroom.

Other than routine repairs and maintenance, no additional changes were made in the family's private quarters, basement, storage areas, or attic. All areas have routine maintenance inspections and regular cleaning schedules.

Grand Hall / Atrium - As the center of official entertaining, the Governor's Mansion Grand Hall can comfortably seat up to 220 people for a luncheon or dinner. For a reception, the hall and attached atrium can accommodate up to 350 people. In the past year, the Hall has played host to 158 events, ranging from a special luncheon for high-school honor students to a well-known country-western entertainer in concert, the Governor's Prayer Breakfast, a dog fashion show to benefit an animal-welfare organization, and an operatic concert and dinner. The varied uses of the facilities reflect the diversity of the people of the State. The atrium also serves as a gallery to showcase the work of Arkansas artists and craftspeople. This provides special interest for guests to view as they mingle at various functions.

In the past year, the Grand Hall and atrium have undergone routine maintenance and upkeep. A new crystal chandelier was added to the Hall in April 2009, which provides a shining centerpiece for the Hall. It was designed with an emphasis on symbols of the State, including diamond-shaped crystals, native rock crystal, bronze pine cones, beaded crystal apple blossoms, and 25 stars and candles. The "Arkansas Chandelier" was purchased with a grant from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Commission and private donations.

The Grand Hall banquet kitchen has also undergone some reorganization and upgrades for a more efficient operation.

Mansion Guest House - In the past year, the Mansion Guest House has undergone a major upgrade with enhancements to the living-room area. The fireplace was refurbished with new marble tile, cabinets and book shelves were redesigned, and new furniture was donated by the Arkansas Home Furnishings Association. The bathroom also received a major remodeling. The Guest House is now more suitable for accommodating special guests who visit the Mansion for overnight stays.

Governor's Office - The Governor's office on the property, located on the east side of the Mansion, is in excellent shape after undergoing remodeling over two years ago. It receives routine maintenance and cleaning. In August, a faulty air-conditioning compressor had to be replaced, but it was handled under the service agreement with the HVAC provider.

Appurtenant Buildings - The Security Office, housing the State Police Executive Protection Detail on the east side of the property, and the Carriage House maintenance and storage building on the west side of the property, are both in good working order, with only minor maintenance and repair necessary in the past year. Evaporator coils had to be replaced in air-conditioning units at both buildings and were not covered under the service agreement.

Mansion Landscaping and Gardens - The new landscaping project, completed almost two years ago, continues to flourish and improve as the seasons turn. The hiring of a full-time trained horticulturist last fall to properly care for the grounds and gardens (an extra allotted position that had gone unfilled) marked a significant improvement in the condition of the entire property. An enhancement to the grounds this past summer included the addition of more zoysia-grass sod on the southeastern and northwestern lawns. This work was done by the Mansion in-house landscaping crew.

Additionally, a new wooden bridge was added to more easily connect two areas of lawn on the southeast side of the mansion and a mass planting of Knock Out roses was added in the parterre garden for more color (at no expense to the State). A rock retaining wall was added beside the vegetable garden by the Mansion work crew, and with the cooperation of the Arkansas Highway Department, some repairs were made to the access road there. Seasonal plantings of annual flowers at the front of the Mansion and around the parterre garden area add to the beauty of the property for the enjoyment of the many guests who visit during the year.