

Business

▲ Dow	+0.56	12,666
▲ Nasdaq	+19.01	2,490
▲ S&P 500	+2.02	1,450
▲ Russell 2000	+5.79	816
▼ 10-yr. note	-0.03	4.74%

Property lines

By Tom Ramstack

Edgerley tapped for state position

David Edgerley is taking over the state's business and economic development department at a time of transition for Maryland's real estate industry.

State planners say the federal government's Base Realignment and Closure plan will bring 40,000 to 60,000 new jobs to Maryland in the next few years.

That prospect already is attracting new housing and retail projects for residents and office complexes for defense contractors.

The development will be a principal focus for Mr. Edgerley, former Montgomery County economic development director who was appointed yesterday as Maryland's secretary of business and economic development by Gov. Martin O'Malley.

Many of the new jobs will be located at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County and Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County.

Mr. Edgerley led the Rockville Town Square project and revitalization of downtown Silver Spring, which brought in more than \$1 billion in new real estate development.

He was instrumental in persuading Discovery Communications to relocate its headquarters to downtown Silver Spring. The building opened in April 2003 and quickly became a magnet for television production companies, retailers and condominium projects.

"It sells space, it rents space when you bring in somebody like that," said Susan Hoffmann, marketing and special events manager for the Silver Spring Regional Center, Montgomery County's local office in Silver Spring. "He's very good at putting together the deal and putting the right people together."

"The revitalization effort he led in Silver Spring, for example, proves that he is capable of these large scale projects," said Rick Abbruzzese, spokesman for Mr. O'Malley.

Mr. Edgerley was director of Allegany County's economic development department before taking the same job in Montgomery County in 1995, which he held until late 2006.

Mr. Edgerley pledged yesterday to "make our state more business-friendly. . ."

In other news . . .

• Real estate firm Jones Lang LaSalle has completed a \$115 million sale of 1310 North Courthouse, a 353,077-square-foot office building in Arlington, to MRP Properties LLC.

Telecommunications giant Verizon's lease on the building expires in June 2008, giving the new owners "the flexibility to reposition the asset," Jones Lang LaSalle said in a statement. "Repositioning the asset" is nearly certain to mean some of Washington's law firms would consider relocating or opening satellite offices in the building, according to commercial real estate leasing agents.

"It stands to reason that given what costs have done in downtown D.C. from a rental standpoint and the size of some of these law firms, you will see some of those firms jump over the river for a good location and lower rents," said John Kevill, Jones Lang LaSalle's managing director of capital markets.

Rents in the Rosslyn-Courthouse-Ballston corridor cost around \$40 per square foot for space that would cost an additional \$15 to \$20 per square foot in downtown Washington.

At the same time, law firms in Washington are on an expansion binge as a result of consolidations and increased specialization within their field.

"No question that law firms are taking more space now compared with five or 10 years ago," said Phil Horowitz, a real estate attorney for the Washington law firm Venable LLP.

• Property Lines runs on Thursdays. Call Tom Ramstack at 202/636-3180 or e-mail tramstack@washingtontimes.com.

BWI, Reagan break passenger records

By Sean Lenggell
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The sky got a bit more crowded above the nation's capital last year.

Ronald Reagan Washington National and Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall airports served a record number of commercial passengers in 2006.

And while the area's busiest

airport, Washington Dulles International, reported a 15 percent decrease in commercial passengers in 2006 compared with its record high the previous year, 2006 still was the second-busiest year in the facility's history.

A total of 62.2 million passengers used the three airports in 2006, according to reports released yesterday by BWI and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which oper-

ates Dulles and Reagan airports. Only 2005's total of 64.5 million passengers is higher.

"What these figures really reflect is that the Washington region has a strong and growing economy," said Leo Schefer, president of the Washington Airports Task Force, a nonprofit group that promotes the expansion and enhancement of Dulles and Reagan airports.

BWI served almost 20.7 mil-

lion passengers in 2006, a 4.8 percent increase over 2005, when 19.7 million fliers used the Linthicum, Md., facility.

Southwest Airlines was BWI's leading carrier last year, serving almost 10.7 million passengers and accounting for more than 51 percent of the airport's passenger traffic.

Air Tran Airways was BWI's second-leading carrier in 2006, with more than 2.13 million pas-

sengers — a 10.5 percent increase from 2005.

BWI "is an important economic engine that helps drive the development of Maryland and the entire national capital region," Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley said.

Reagan's 18.5 million passengers in 2006 was about 4 percent more than the airport's previous

see AIRPORT, page C9



The tables at M'Dawg Haute Dog are "littered" with photos of pet dogs from the Adams Morgan neighborhood where the hot-dog shop is located.

A restaurant to relish

Hot dogs go upscale at offbeat, meaty eatery

By Jen Haberkorn
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Years ago, during Washington Redskins games, a young Gregory Hill could be spotted yelling "Hot dogs!" up and down RKF Stadium to make extra money.

Soon, he'll be selling the iconic American food again. But he won't have to lug a heavy hot-dog warmer around to do it.

Mr. Hill, head chef of David Gregory Restau Lounge, and the owners of Amsterdam Falafelshop plan to open a restaurant next week that sells only hot dogs.

They're hoping M'Dawg Haute Dog, at 2418 18th St. NW, is the cat's meow.

The menu at M'Dawg, pronounced "meh-dog," reads like a world tour of regional sausages. It starts with a trip to New Jersey for "the Ripper," a hot dog deep-fried until its skin rips. Then it's over to Chicago for put-ketchup-on-it-and-you-die "Red Hots," on to Milwaukee for its old-fashioned "Ussinger German bratwursts," down to New Orleans for its Cajun-style Andouille sausage and back home for the District's half-smokes.

see HOT DOG, page C9

Matt Hand's menu board for M'Dawg Haute Dogs in the District will greet customers with an array of creative hot-dog specialties when it opens next week.

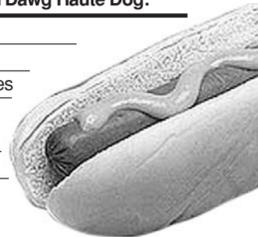


Photographs by Michael Connor/The Washington Times

WORLD TOUR OF WIENERS
Among the items on the menu of M'Dawg Haute Dog:

- Chicago Red Hots
- German bratwursts
- New Orleans-style Andouille sausages
- New Jersey Rippers
- D.C. halfsmokes
- Hebrew National hot dogs
- Kobe beef hot dogs

Source: M'Dawg Haute Dog



The Washington Times

FDA gives first OK to over-the-counter diet drug

By Gregory Lopes
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Food and Drug Administration yesterday approved the first government-sanctioned weight-loss aid for over-the-counter sales.

Today's market for weight-loss drugs is saturated with dietary supplements that do not require FDA approval. The newly approved drug, called Alli, is the only FDA-approved weight-loss product available to consumers

without a prescription, and is the first clinically proven over-the-counter product that is intended to be taken as part of a comprehensive diet plan.

"Over a billion dollars is spent every year on dietary supplement products that the FDA has not approved. It is very significant that there now is a product available over the counter that is FDA approved and we know what the safety of it is," said Curtis Rosebraugh, deputy director for the FDA's Center for Drug

Evaluation and Research.

British drug maker GlaxoSmithKline PLC said Alli helps people lose 50 percent more weight than they could by dieting alone. Alli works by blocking about 25 percent of the fat in the food a person eats.

Because of the way it works, Alli must be taken with a reduced-calorie, low-fat diet containing about 15 grams of fat per meal. FDA officials say taking a multivitamin along with Alli enhances the drug's benefits.

Since 1999, GlaxoSmithKline has been selling the prescription version of the drug, Orlistat, which comes in higher doses than the over-the-counter Alli. Orlistat will remain available by prescription, GlaxoSmithKline said. Alli is expected to be available in stores nationwide this summer for \$2 to \$3 a day. GlaxoSmithKline estimates that 5 million to 6 million people will use the drug each year.

see DIET, page C9

Long & Foster buys brokerage Gains access to high-end homes

By Bryce Baschuk
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Washington real estate titan Long & Foster Inc., yesterday bought the high-end brokerage arm of W.C. & A.N. Miller Co., a family-owned real estate firm in the District.

The sale gives Long & Foster better access to sell million-dollar homes in the Washington area.

The 95-year-old firm approached Long & Foster in December about the sale, whose terms were not disclosed.

"This is a situation where we can take an asset of the company and leverage the brand and relationships of another company to make it better," said Ted Miller, president of the W.C. & A.N. Miller Co., and grandson of the founder.

Mr. Miller said small real estate firms, such as his, have had difficulty competing in a market dominated by "megabrokers," and have been forced to consolidate or sell.

The addition of W.C. & A.N. Miller's 400 employees and seven real estate offices in the area will increase Long & Foster's staff to more than 17,000 agents.

The combined 2006 sales for the two companies would have been nearly \$40 billion, company officials said.

"We wanted to find a partner that would carry out the hard work our team has done, and I think we found one in Long & Foster," Mr. Miller said.

Company officials said the effect of the sale should be negligible to home buyers and sellers.

"Our customers will be ensured that all the things they've come to know will continue, and will be enhanced by the strength and capacity of the Long & Foster company," he said.

W.C. & A.N. Miller will keep its acquisition and development business, as well as its new home construction and property management operations.

The brokerage unit of the business made up less than 10 percent of the company's total asset value. The company will be called W.C. & A.N. Miller, a Long & Foster Company.

see FOSTER, page C9

EU eyes curbs on new-car emissions

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Commission proposed binding rules yesterday to force automakers to cut carbon-dioxide emissions from new cars sold in the European Union by 2012, arguing that the tough measure was crucial for fighting global warming.

The plan faces strong opposition from the auto industry, and EU officials acknowledged it would likely lead to a rise in the sale price of new cars.

It foresees lower emissions limits of nearly 210 grams of carbon dioxide per mile for new cars sold or imported into the EU by 2012. Average emissions are now around 260 grams per mile.

see EU, page C9

CHECKLIST

A roundup of top business news today

Regional

Time Warner Inc., its Sterling, Va., AOL unit, bankers and accountants agreed to pay \$105 million to the California State Teachers' Retirement System to settle a lawsuit claiming AOL artificially boosted its stock price before its merger with Time Warner.

EarthLink Inc. should be ordered to pay at least \$20 million in damages to Inline Connection Corp. of Arlington for infringing on three patents, a lawyer told jurors at the start of a federal trial in Wilmington, Del. Inline, run by inventor David D. Goodman, sued EarthLink in 2002 over patents on digital-subscriber lines that speed up Internet downloads.

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, a Democrat, urged the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reject a liquefied natural gas import plant at Sparrows Point near Baltimore proposed by Arlington power-generation company AES Corp. The state sent a 90-page report saying the plant poses a threat to safety and the environment.

Hedge fund manager David Einhorn of Greenlight Capital Inc. said it's "not credible" that D.C. business development firm Allied Capital Corp.'s management was unaware that someone working for it had obtained his telephone records through the use of now-illegal pretexting.

American Bank Holdings Inc. of Silver Spring said it will acquire the Grange Bank of Columbus, Ohio, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Grange Mutual Casualty Co. Terms were not disclosed.

Middleburg Financial Corp., a financial holding company in Middleburg, Va., said net income for its fourth quarter ended Dec. 31 fell 6 percent to \$1.5 million (33 cents per diluted share) compared with \$1.6 million (41 cents) a year ago. Net income for 2006 rose 11 percent to \$8 million (\$1.90) versus \$7.2 million (\$1.84) the previous year.

Annapolis Bancorp said net income for its fourth quarter ended Dec. 31 fell 18 percent to \$827,000 (20 cents) compared with \$1.01 million (24 cents) a year ago. Net income for 2006 fell 1 percent to \$2.95 million (70 cents) from \$2.98 million (71 cents) the previous year.

Increased sales of flu and child-respiratory drugs helped MedImmune Inc. of Gaithersburg post a strong profit for its fourth-quarter ended Dec. 31. Sales missed estimates, however. Net income totaled \$120.7 million (50 cents per share) compared with a loss of \$22.4 million (9 cents) a year ago because of acquisition costs. For 2006, net income totaled \$48.7 million (20 cents), up from a loss of \$16.6 million (7 cents) in 2005.

National

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Adlai Hardin in New York approved a disclosure statement that will be sent to creditors along with a Delta Air Lines reorganization plan, a step that accelerates the airline's exit from bankruptcy. The move allows Delta to begin soliciting votes for its plan to emerge this spring as a stand-alone company worth more than \$9.5 billion.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Adlai Hardin blocked Comair pilots from going on strike if the Delta Air Lines subsidiary imposes wage cuts and other

concessions on them. The judge granted Comair's request to block a strike and any other job actions that would disrupt Comair's operations.

Blackstone Group trumped rival suitor Vornado Realty Trust, acquiring Chicago investor Sam Zell's Equity Office Properties Trust in a \$23 billion all-cash deal. Blackstone's final offer of \$55.50 per share was a 15 percent increase from its first bid in November.

Sam Zell has approached Tribune Co. with a proposal that could lead to a bid for the media conglomerate, according to a published report. The Chicago Tribune, citing unidentified sources, said the Chicago real estate mogul is in preliminary talks with Tribune Co. on a complicated proposal. Details of the bid were not available.

Stock of New York Times Co. rose on speculation billionaire investor Warren Buffett is buying shares of newspaper companies, traders said. Mr. Buffett might be attracted to the cash flows of companies like the New York Times and Gannett Co. of McLean, said newspaper analyst John Morton of Morton Research in Silver Spring.

When Maine's first Whole Foods Market opens next week, it will have something no other Whole Foods store has: live lobsters. Whole Foods said in June it would stop selling live lobsters and crabs in the name of compassion. But it is making an exception in Maine, a state synonymous with lobster. The catch: It is using a New Hampshire supplier.

International

Brazil wants to develop a joint standard with the United States for the production and use of ethanol to promote trade in the fuel, Trade Minister Luiz Fernando Furlan said. The two countries together produce about 70 percent of all ethanol fuel worldwide, which Americans make from corn, while Brazilians use more efficient sugar cane.

South Korean cattle farmers protested as U.S. and South Korean officials discussed easing restrictions on imports of American beef, an issue Washington says threatens to scuttle a potential free-trade agreement. About 30 farmers chanted "No U.S. beef, no more talks" in Anyang, just south of Seoul, the site of the two-day talks.

From wire dispatches and staff reports

SAVINGS YIELDS					
Based on minimum deposits. Rates gathered February 7					
MM	6-MO	18			
DA*	CD	1-YR	MO	2-YR	5-YR
Chevy Chase Savings Bank, F.S.B.					
0.65	2.90	3.15	3.20	3.20	3.80
Citibank					
0.50	5.00	4.30	4.10	4.45	4.15
FedChoice Federal CU					
2.00	5.30	5.30	5.24	5.24	5.09
HUD FCU					
2.02	4.86	4.97	NA	4.81	4.81
National Capital Bank					
1.26	3.76	4.07	NA	4.33	NA
Navy Federal CU					
3.81	NA	5.05	NA	5.15	5.45
Presidential Bank, F.S.B.					
NA	5.00	5.25	NA	5.30	5.35
United Bank					
0.75	4.60	4.70	4.75	4.80	5.00
US Postal Service FCU					
2.53	5.09	5.20	5.35	5.35	5.35
White House FCU					
1.26	3.81	4.33	NA	4.59	NA
WASHINGTON AVERAGES					
1.64	4.48	4.63	4.53	4.72	4.88

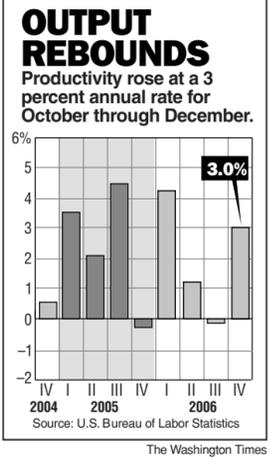
*Money Market Deposit Account. r=Rate. Based on minimum deposits. All interest rates are subject to change without notice. Source: The Meyers Report, Lincolnshire, Ill.

Productivity let up in '06

Productivity, the most important ingredient in a rising standard of living, increased in 2006 at the slowest rate in nine years, while labor costs shot up at the fastest rate in six years. The measure of output per hour of work rose by 2.1 percent for all of 2006, down slightly from a 2.3 percent increase in 2005. It was the slowest pace since a 1.6 percent gain in 1997. However, the year ended on a brighter note with productivity growing at an annual rate of 3 percent in the fourth quarter, nearly double what economists

had been expecting. Labor costs for each unit of output rose 3.2 percent for all of 2006, up from a 2 percent increase in 2005 and the fastest rise in worker wages and benefits since a 4.2 percent increase in 2000. For the fourth quarter, wage pressures eased a bit, rising by just 1.7 percent, a better outcome than analysts had been expecting after a 3.2 percent rate of increase in the third quarter. While rising wages are good for workers, the concern is that if those increases outstrip gains in productivity, then businesses will start raising the price of

their products, setting off a classic wage-price spiral. The Federal Reserve is keeping close tabs on the performance of productivity and unit labor costs for any signs that slowing productivity and rising wage pressures are having an adverse effect on inflation. The hope is that businesses will meet worker wage demands by trimming their record profits rather than boosting the cost of their goods. Currently, inflation has been well-behaved, with underlying inflation pressures starting to recede after last year's surge in energy prices.



Francisco N. Codina, group vice president for Ford North American marketing and sales, unveiled the new Ford Taurus X crossover vehicle during the Chicago Auto Show media preview yesterday.

Mulally brings back Taurus New Ford CEO renaming Five Hundred for 2008

CHICAGO (AP) — On his first day at work as chief executive of Ford Motor Co., Alan Mulally had a question that no one could answer: Why get rid of the Taurus? Long before he was hired last September, the struggling company had decided to stop making what once was the most popular car in the United States, a decision that had him perplexed. "How can it go away?" he remembered asking. "It's the best-selling car in America." Yesterday, at Mr. Mulally's insistence, the company announced that it was reviving the

Taurus name. The Dearborn, Mich.-based automaker made the official announcement at the Chicago Auto Show media preview that it would place the storied moniker on the 2008 version of the Five Hundred. In addition, an upgraded version of the Freestyle crossover vehicle will be re-badged as the Taurus X, and the Mercury Montego, the Five Hundred's cousin, will be renamed the Sable in the coming model year. The Sable was the Taurus' nearly identical cousin, with 2 million sold under the Mercury name.

Mr. Mulally, in an interview with the Associated Press, said the Taurus' demise was one of the biggest disappointments he discovered as he started work. He still hasn't found out why the company gave up on the name of a car purchased by 7 million buyers during its 21-year history. All he knows is the decision was wrong and needed to be fixed. "The Taurus, of course, has been an icon for Ford and its customers," Mr. Mulally said. "The customers want it back. They didn't want it to go away. They wanted us to keep improving it."

AIRPORT

From page C8

record of 17.8 million passengers in 2005. Last year's total was a 16 percent increase over the 15.9 million passengers who used the airport in 2004.

US Airways is Reagan's leading carrier, operating almost half of all commercial flights from the airport. Dulles served 23 million passengers in 2006 — about 4 million fewer passengers than 2005. But last year's total was about 1 percent more than the 22.8 million passengers who used the airport in 2004, and a 26.5 percent increase over the 17 million passengers served in 2003. United Airlines is the leading carrier at Dulles, operating about two-thirds of the airport's more than 400 daily domestic airline departures. "Our 2006 numbers prove that strong demand for air service in the Washington region continues," said James Bennett, president and chief executive

HEAVY TRAFFIC			
Passenger traffic is setting records at Washington's three major airports.			
Annual commercial airline passengers, in millions			
Year	BWI	National	Dulles
2002	19	12.9	17.2
2003	19.7	14.2	17
2004	20.3	15.9	22.8
2005	19.7	17.8	27*
2006	20.7*	18.5*	23

* record
Source: Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport

officer of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. The drop in passengers at Dulles is attributed mostly to the demise of Independence Air, which was the airport's leading carrier by number of flights for most of 2005 before the budget airline filed for bankruptcy in November 2005 and ceased flying two months later. Several carriers since have introduced new service at Dulles, including United and

low-cost carriers JetBlue Airways and Southwest Airlines, which has helped mitigate the loss of Independence, airport authority officials said. "To be honest, I thought service at Dulles would drop more than [15 percent] with the collapse of Independence Air," Mr. Schefer said. "The fact that it hasn't both attests to the strength of the market and the fact that Independence Air showed the potential for lower fares at Dulles."

HOT DOG

From page C8

M'Dawg will also serve Mr. Hill's own-recipe sausages, vegetarian hot dogs, corn dogs and chili.

A Japanese Kobe beef hot dog, a delicacy that will cost about \$20, will be on the menu in a few weeks, said co-owner Arianne Bennett. Co-owner Scott Bennett, Arianne's husband, calls M'Dawg "a place where the regional hot dog lover can feel at home." The menu is still in development and could change based on suggestions from patrons. "If enough people from Cleveland [talk] about their hot dog, we'll offer that, too," Mr. Bennett said. "There are so many in this country. It's really a beautiful thing." People feel strongly about their hometown hot dogs, said Janet Riley, president of the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council, a D.C. trade group.

"Maybe it's because hot dogs are so strongly associated with memories — family outings, picnics, sporting events — they evoke that good feeling," Ms. Riley said.

Hot-dog stands and restaurants are common in cities such as New York and Chicago. But they're rare in the Washington area, Ms. Riley said, even though more hot dogs were consumed in the Washington-Baltimore corridor than any other metropolitan area except New York and Los Angeles in 2004. Perhaps the most famous hot-dog restaurant in the city is Ben's Chili Bowl, which also sells half-smokes. There's also Weenie Beenie in Shirlington and a handful of hot-dog restaurants in food courts around the region. "There is a need for a niche, single-item comfort-food [restaurant]," Mr. Hill said. At M'Dawg, hot dogs will cost \$2.50 to \$6, Mrs. Bennett said. Traditional condiments such as ketchup, mustard, onions and relish will be free.

But the top dog at M'Dawg will be its toppings bar, which will feature slaws, sauerkrauts, chutneys and cabbages, all made by Mr. Hill and sold for a small extra charge.

That idea came from the Bennetts' falafel shop, which sells a slew of unlimited toppings for an extra fee. One of Mr. Hill's favorite combinations is a hot dog deep-fried with bacon and topped with bleu cheese and romaine lettuce. "You can really have fun and build — do your own thing," he said. Besides hot dogs and toppings, the only other items on the menu will be ripple-cut fries, Rice Krispies treats, ginger snaps cookies and root beer floats. "We're trying to keep it really simple," said Mrs. Bennett, who, with her husband, is scouting D.C. locations for a second falafel shop. "We've found if you can really focus on one food and do it well, people really come to it."

EU

From page C8

EU Industry Commissioner Guenter Verheugen urged governments to offer subsidies and tax rebates to buyers who seek out more environment-friendly cars. "We have to be clear about this: This is something which would considerably increase manufacturing costs per car," he said, but added that extra costs "will be more than balanced by the fact that cars will have greater fuel efficiency." The plan also calls for increased use of biofuels and cleaner fossil fuels, meant to reduce car emissions by 25 percent, even lower than the 210-gram objective, EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas said. It also calls for added research to get a 153-gram-per-mile level by 2020.

"If action is delayed, it will cost far more," Mr. Dimas said. The United States does not regulate carbon-dioxide emissions from vehicles, although the government and several states are looking into proposals, said John Millette, a spokesman for the Environmental Protection Agency. California has adopted a plan, which the auto industry has challenged in a lawsuit, for incremental decreases in carbon-dioxide emissions, beginning with cars made in 2009. Cars and light trucks made that year would be limited to 323 grams of carbon dioxide per mile. By 2016, that figure would drop to 205 grams per mile, a 30 percent reduction over cars made in 2002. EU officials argued that the new rules, if backed by EU governments, would keep Europe's ailing car industry viable in the long-term, amid growing cheap imports from Asia.

FOSTER

From page C8

Long & Foster also will gain W.C. & A.N. Miller's affiliation with Christie's, a leading auction house based in London. "Now we have a fine old company, with a fine old company name . . . that will let us go after the upper-end market like we've never done before," said Wesley Foster Jr., chief executive officer and chairman of Long & Foster. Mr. Foster founded the firm in 1968. Long & Foster operates from 259 sales offices throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. "We have a bit more to offer now that we have picked up the Christie's franchise," Mr. Foster said. "It will help us sell more million-dollar homes in the Washington area." Industry sources said some Miller agents were worried about being swallowed up by such a large firm and were talking to other companies.

"I can't say everyone will walk away ecstatic," Mr. Miller said. "But that's what happens when change occurs. We've worked very hard to ensure a good transition." "Nobody likes change too much," said Michael Seay, president of the real estate agents group at W.C. & A.N. Miller. "Some of our agents were wary [about the deal] going into it, but after speaking with them today, they came away feeling very good about the transaction." Mr. Seay said the agents will benefit from greater access to the marketing, technology and support that a larger company like Long & Foster can provide. The deal is Long & Foster's second acquisition of a residential brokerage arm in the last six months. In July, Long & Foster bought Fonville Morisey Realty in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.

DIET

From page C8

Nearly 60 million U.S. adults are overweight or more seriously obese, putting them at increased risk of health problems such as hypertension, diabetes and heart disease, according to the National Institutes of Health. Studies show that a person taking Alli three times a day can lose 5 to 10 pounds over six months or, for every 5 pounds a person loses from dieting, Alli can take off 2 or 3 pounds more. Studies also show that Alli has the potential to be more effective in extremely overweight people.

"If you're markedly overweight, you are likely to have more of a benefit from taking the drug," said Charles Ganley, director of the FDA's Office of Non-Prescription Products. "There will be people who don't benefit from it." Public Citizen, a consumer watchdog group, criticized the FDA for approving Alli, citing concerns about the drug's association with colon cancer. "The Food and Drug Administration's decision to approve, for over-the-counter use, a diet drug that clearly causes pre-cancerous lesions of the colon is the height of recklessness," said Sidney Wolfe, director of Public Citizen's Health Research Group.

Wal-Mart, foe join on health

Executives from Wal-Mart and three other large U.S. employers yesterday joined union leaders in calling for "quality, affordable" health care for every American by 2012. However, they did not propose any specific policies to achieve this goal, or commit to spending any extra money in the near term to provide health coverage to more workers. Joining Wal-Mart Stores Inc. Chief Executive Officer Lee Scott and Service Employees International Union leader Andrew Stern at a Washington press conference were top executives from Intel Corp., AT&T Inc. and Kelly Services Inc., a temporary-staffing agency.