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news & notes

January 8, 1993 Volume 3, Number 14

The Rockefeller University

President Wiesel shares his thoughts for new year

In the first week of 1993, President Torsten Wiesel spoke with News & Notes about the past year, his plans for the university's future, and issues that affect science today.

News&Notes (N&N): What were some of the major issues you faced as president in 1992?

Wiesel: Overall, I focused attention on and allocated resources to recruiting new faculty to the university and supporting young scientists. We need to strengthen our preeminent position in science. We have already taken great strides toward this goal through the appointment this year of one senior professor, Mary Elizabeth Hatten, and five junior heads of labs.

The issue of the Hospital also came up very early in my term. We decided to invest new resources in the Hospital and to start an intensive campaign to raise money for the Clinical Scholars Program. This program will bring individuals skilled in doing research and caring for patients to the university. The campaign was successful thanks to the Herzog Foundation as well as other benefactors.

N&N: What are some of the important areas for recruiting?

Wiesel: I believe chemistry and

physics are vital to the future of the university. We have had visiting committees in both physics and chemistry which have been very constructive. The committees realized that Rockefeller is not a typical university, and their recommendations were very much in tune with the needs that many of us on campus had perceived. They are trying to identify first-rate people in these fields with an interest in interacting with biologists—a chemist, for instance, interested in looking at biologically active molecules, as Tom Kaiser was.

We are planning to strengthen our involvement in two very important areas in biomedicine—AIDS research and the Human Genome Project. We are seeking to recruit outstanding individuals working in these fields. However, our primary focus should always be to look for outstanding people in any field. The work of these individuals may open up entirely new fields of research—as it has throughout the university's history.

The way the university is organized lends itself to this approach. We don't teach like a medical school or undergraduate university and therefore we are not compelled to have representation in all areas. We can be eclectic. This is a very



President Torsten Wiesel

special place. It is small enough so we know each other and interact. Rockefeller has always been attractive to scientists because the focus is on research. I came here in 1983 from Harvard largely because the only thing asked of me was to do good research.

N&N: Why do you see the dedication of the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and David Rockefeller Research Building as a major event in 1992?

Wiesel: The new research building is a real asset for the university. Some faculty were concerned about the expense at a time when the National Institutes of Health

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Population Council pays tribute to its outgoing president

Two hundred scientists, administrators and staff of The Population Council gathered in Rockefeller University's Caspary Auditorium last month for a symposium and farewell party paying tribute to the outgoing president of the organization, George Zeidenstein.

The symposium focused on the present and future of population issues. Topics included reproductive health, roles and status of women, contraceptive develop-

ment, and the evolution of family planning programs.

"I am proud of George Zeidenstein and proud of his work at The Population Council," said McGeorge Bundy, chairman of The

Population Council Board of Trustees, at the symposium.

During his 17-year presidency, Zeidenstein helped internationalize

See *Council*, page 2



John Sholtis, Media Resource Service Center

The Population Council held a symposium in honor of its outgoing president, George Zeidenstein, at The Rockefeller University last month. Zeidenstein, McGeorge Bundy, chairman of the Council's board, and Joan Dunlop, president of the International Women's Health Coalition (left to right) gather at the reception.

Campus feels storm's fury

For many at The Rockefeller University, one of the most vivid memories of 1992 will be the storm of Fri., Dec. 11, the Northeaster that sent gale-force winds and driving rain through the campus.

Those who finally succeeded in reaching the university despite clogged traffic and on-again, off-again public transportation were distracted by the storm outside. "How can we work with this going on?" asked Thelma Chen, assistant professor in the Allfrey lab, who couldn't resist watching the swollen East River from the windows of Tower as it rose and gradually engulfed the heliport, then the FDR Drive.

Sixty-mile-per-hour winds shook the campus and tore down several trees and shrubs. "I've never seen anything like it," said Grounds Supervisor James Sullivan who, together with members of Custodial Services and the Security Department, monitored the most vulnerable trees throughout the storm.

Security guards cordoned off the walk near the tennis court when it became apparent that several London planes close to the West entrance of Bronx were ready to fall. By afternoon, four planes and a cryptomeria tree had blown down. Also downed were a large, old willow, an amelanchier tree, a crab apple tree, and a 25-foot holly tree. No one was injured.

Apart from falling trees, Security's greatest concern was the possibility of a flood in the 24-hour computing and communication machine room on the D level of Smith Hall Annex. Armand Gazes, associate director of Computing Services, realized the danger of inundation and alerted Security. Security closely monitored the tides of the East River while Gazes tried to block off the entrance.

"The Grounds Department offered sand bags to block the machine room doorway," Gazes said, "so my colleagues and I braved the winds and rain to retrieve them from the gardeners' shed. Unfortunately, they turned out to be large, 70-lb. bags. Wet, each

See *Storm*, page 2

2 RU strengthens residence security

4 Campus celebrates holiday season

University outlines new security measures for residences

At a meeting of Scholars Residence and Faculty House tenants on Wednesday, William Howe, director of Housing, outlined the security measures taken by the university in response to a series of burglaries last month.

"It became clear during our investigation that the security system that had worked well for 18 years was now inadequate," said Howe. "Something radically differ-

ent was needed." New measures include the installation of a more advanced lock system in Scholars Residence and a revision of administrative procedures that keep track of master keys.

Seven apartments in Scholars Residence were burglarized in early December. Small, personal effects, such as jewelry, cash, and electronic devices, were taken.

Since there were no signs of

forced entry, a key was probably used to burglarize the apartments, said Joseph Nekola, director of Security. The university's Security Department and the metropolitan police are continuing to investigate the thefts. "Whenever too many keys are given out, anyone can get a hold of one, duplicate it, and then take advantage of it," he said.

The new locks—from Best Lock Corporation—can only be reproduced with sophisticated equipment and are extremely difficult to pick. Moreover, the possibility of crossover, where one key can accidentally open similar locks on other doors, is considerably lessened by a coding system that makes every key and lock unique. Finally, the Best system includes a computerized method to keep track of all keys. "This system has a reputation

for being state-of-the-art," said Howe, who selected the system in consultation with Nekola, Eugene Roth, Carpenter Shop supervisor, and Cliff Norton, building supervisor.

In addition to changing the lock system for Scholars Residence, both residences will implement new administrative procedures to ensure better control of all master keys. Maintenance crews will now use apartment master keys only upon authorization by the building supervisor and the tenant.

Two hundred and eighty-nine new locks—one for every apartment and utility room—will be installed in Scholars Residence by the end of the month. Until then, a security guard will continue to monitor both Scholars Residence and Faculty House.

Storm sweeps through RU campus

(continued from page 1)

must have weighed at least 100 lbs. We borrowed a dolly, and, in several trips, carted the sand bags over to the Annex and piled them up against the door. When we realized we were wading ankle-deep in the East River, we borrowed hip boots from Custodial Services. Fortunately, the tide never reached the door, but it came close. In my opinion, it was the storm of the century."

Many employees who had difficulty getting to work in the morning left early in the day and found that even with a head start, the trip home was a greater challenge.

"I'm amazed I got home at all," said Raul Acevedo, library page, who left the university at 2:00 P.M. and arrived home in the Bronx at 8:30 P.M. "The 6-train was run-

ning so I managed to squeeze on, but then the service stopped at 86th St. and everyone had to get off. I waited two hours for a bus, along with 120 other people. My umbrella broke, so I was completely soaked. When I realized waiting for a bus was hopeless, I spent another two hours trying to hail a cab. I finally managed to grab a Gypsy cab, and for \$22 spent two and a half hours in traffic.

"I got home exhausted and hungry, and water was coming out of my shoes. Fortunately, I had the weekend to recover!"

The campus also dried out over the weekend, and by Monday the university was back to normal—although some may have lingered a little longer over coffee that morning, recounting stories of their travails during the great storm of 1992.

Council honors outgoing leader

(continued from page 1)

the organization's Board of Trustees, involved it in women's reproductive health issues, and oversaw the development of the first implantable contraceptive device, Norplant.

Previously, Zeidenstein, a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard Law School, worked at the Ford Foundation in New York and Bangladesh, directed the Peace Corps in Nepal, and was active in the 1964 voters registration movement. This year, he

assumes a position at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies.

Margaret Catley-Carlson, former Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare of the Canadian Department of External Affairs, succeeds Zeidenstein as president. She is the first woman and the first non-American in this position.

The Population Council, established in 1952 by John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, applies science and technology to population problems in developing countries. Its biomedical research division, which investigates and develops contraceptive technology and studies male reproductive physiology, is located on The Rockefeller University campus.

Letters to the editor:

Thanks

I would like to thank my crew of Frank Duffy and Francisco Molina who braved the strong winds and rain on Dec. 11 to keep the walkways and main entrance free of water and debris. Also, I thank Tom Mineo and his assistance with the clean-up.

James Sullivan
Supervisor, Grounds

Holiday Festivity

Wow—what a holiday party was put on by the President's Office! A new age has dawned, what with a band, stilt-walkers, jugglers, clowns, and palm-readings. Yes, palm-readings! What can we expect for next year: tea-leaves in cups, astrologers, horoscopes? Well, why not—who knows what all this might do for research here at Rockefeller.

Philip Siekevitz
Professor Emeritus

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Jennifer Horne King



Top: The Rockefeller University provided a good view of the East River during the worst storm of 1992. Here, north-bound traffic turns to exit FDR Drive as the East River overflows onto the drive. Bottom: Several trees were brought down on campus by the violent winds.

Wiesel looks back on 1992, forward to university's future

(continued from page 1)

(NIH) is cutting back. It is an expense, but it gives us tremendous opportunities. When it is finished we will have an additional 100,000 square feet of research space—an increase of over 25 percent for the university. Before the new building there was hardly any free space available. Having these facilities is an absolute necessity if we are going to grow and recruit new faculty. During the next five years, the university will expand. As financing becomes available, the six unfinished floors will be completed.

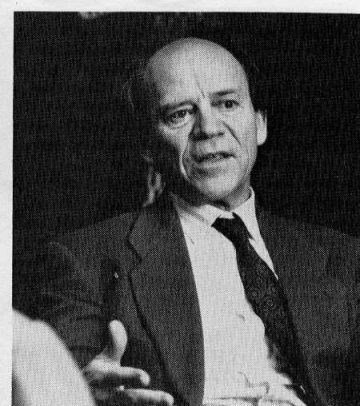
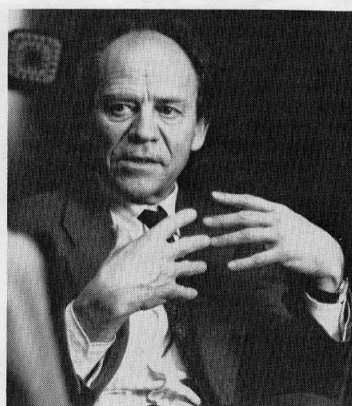
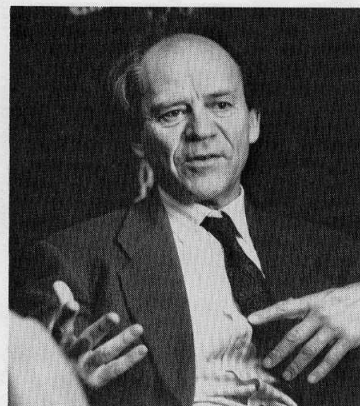
N&N: Has the fiscal position of the university improved?

Wiesel: As you know, the university has been running a deficit. When people talk about deficits at a university it means spending more than five percent of the endowment. In the last two years, starting with David Baltimore's efforts, we have cut the operating deficit from \$12 to \$6 million. This is a process we will have to continue. The university now has less income for several reasons. One is that allowable overhead costs for Federal grants were reduced from 68 to 60 percent. That's several million dollars in income that we don't have any longer. Several big labs also left, which has reduced the amount of money coming into the university.

N&N: What are your thoughts on the shift of government priorities away from basic research?

Wiesel: I think everybody wants to ensure that discoveries made in laboratories can be used for the benefit of society. On the other hand, I don't think representatives of the NIH or National Science Foundation will come to a university like ours and say, "We want you to redirect your research according to our priorities." People like Walter Massey of the National Science Foundation and Bernadine Healy of the NIH realize that the creative freedom of scientists is the essence of the basic research system, and that it can and must be supported.

The fiscal constraints have already had some impact nationally. There is a concern in Congress that the pharmaceutical industry, and companies started by university researchers, profit from discoveries paid for by taxpayers through various federal funding mechanisms, but return very little money to the public. The University of California, supported by the state, is exploring the possibility of setting up a corporation that will allow it



President Torsten Wiesel spoke with *News&Notes* in his office in Caspary Hall. He announced that he will be holding office hours every Friday, from 2:15 to 3:15 P.M.

to earn money from discoveries by scientists. Many research universities are now also considering partnerships with industry. Sandoz, the Swiss pharmaceutical company, will give the Scripps Institute \$300 million over 10 years for the right of first refusal—in essence selling the scientists' discoveries before they are made. A lot of people at other institutions are looking to see if they can make similar deals with the private sector without losing their freedom. These arrangements have emerged in part because the Federal government will probably not continue to be as generous as it has been. We have to find other sources of support for science.

N&N: How does this situation affect Rockefeller?

Wiesel: We are under more pressure to build up the faculty and to make sure the faculty we do recruit can get grants to bring in money. This poses a threat to our ability to be innovative and original. We should be free to hire people with bright ideas who are still unproven, even though Federal agencies tend not to fund these people. That is why we are trying to save money in many ways and to strengthen our diverse bases of support.

N&N: What are some of your plans for the university's future?

Wiesel: One of our major initiatives will be organizing a Neuroscience Center in the new research tower—expanding the possibilities in a field in which the university is already very strong. We will continue to recruit new faculty, with special emphasis on chemistry and physics, but also on our core areas of biological and biomedical research—such as virology and cell biology.

Some members of our faculty would like to see the university respond to the crisis of HIV and antibiotic-resistant bacteria. We want to develop Rockefeller as a

center that interacts with other institutions in the city—at least at the level of finding new tools and approaches to understanding why bacteria are developing resistance, for example. We hope this will lead to new drugs or vaccines. I am encouraging a plan to host an international symposium to energize our efforts in these issues.

In my second year I also hope to improve the research services offered to faculty and students. The primary function of the administration, including the president, is to facilitate research.

N&N: What was the biggest change for you when you became president?

Wiesel: Well, I had to buy suits and neckties [laughing]. Being in a public role has changed my style. I grew up in Sweden, which is a rather formal society, so it is not completely foreign for me to deal with formal settings.

I have learned a great deal about things I hadn't previously worried about, such as the finances of the university. Fund-raising is part of the role of the president. It is interesting to explain what the university is about and why it is important that individuals or foundations support our work. It has also sharpened me by making me think about what is and is not important.

N&N: Do you still have time to do science as president?

Wiesel: Once I decided to take the job, I realized it would be full-time and that my science would suffer. I decided not to do either one half way. After I made that decision I relaxed. I try to keep up on the reading, but to do night-long experiments is not compatible with being president. That's the price, but it is not unreasonable. I have been able to do what I wanted for the last 35 years. To pay dues in the latter part of your career, and help younger sci-

entists pursue research, is in the best tradition of academic science.

N&N: How closely do you work with the Board?

Wiesel: I've become friends with many of its members as president. David Rockefeller has been extremely helpful in my first year, and it has been wonderful to work with the Board's chairman, Dick Furlaud. Similarly, many of the people I meet during the course of fund-raising—chairs of foundations or wealthy individuals interested in an institution like this one—are people of substantial intelligence with interests in both the arts and sciences. The richness of life is not only the ideas you develop from your own experience but the ideas you receive from others. So meeting with the board and various committees, as well as fund-raising, has been on the whole a pleasure.

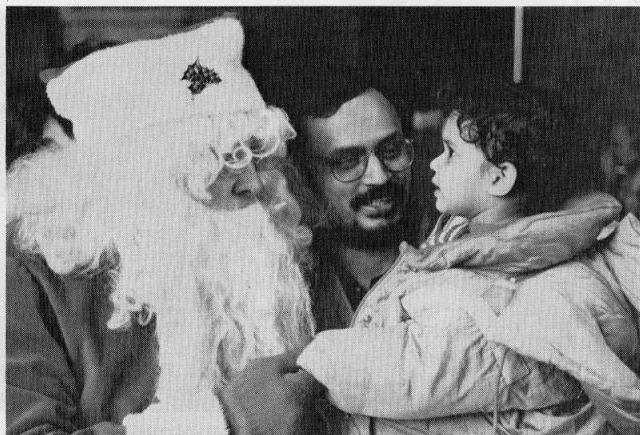
N&N: Overall, how do you feel about your first year as president?

Wiesel: When you look back on the year, you can say that, on the whole, things went well for the university. For me, personally, it was satisfactory in that I feel we are moving in the right direction.

I would also like all members of the university to feel that the door to the president's office is open. To make this possible, I will now be holding office hours every Friday afternoon, from 2:15 to 3:15 P.M. Everyone—faculty and staff—should feel welcome to come see me in confidence with any concerns or issues they may have. I have put aside this hour to sit down and talk. People should just call ahead, x8080, to make an appointment with my office.

I like to think of the university as a scientific village. In a village everyone is important. My hope is that everyone in this community should feel that they are part of something, and be proud of that.

University celebrates holiday season with style



The month of December was filled with formal and informal celebrations on campus. *Top left:* Professor David Baltimore speaks with a high school student after lecturing on viruses as part of the annual Mirsky Christmas Lecture Series, which seeks to interest young people in science. *Top center:* Santa says "hello" to one of the community's children at the university's Holiday Festivity, held in Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall for the first time this year. *Right:* One of the highlights of the Holiday Festivity was an angel, who mingled with the guests. *Bottom left:* Students from the university's Children's School sang and danced in the Holiday Concert. *Bottom center:* Eddie Deas of the Paint Shop dances with a friend at the popular Custodial Services party, one of many sponsored by individual labs and services.

Potpourri

Tri-Institutional Noon Recital

In celebration of the legacy and birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble will perform at the Tri-Institutional Noon Recital today (Jan. 8). The program will include spirituals such as "Go Tell it on the Mountain," "Ah Wanna be Ready," and "Go Down Moses." The recital, to be held in Caspary Auditorium at noon, is free and open to members of the Tri-Institutional community.

Sunday film

La Notte (1971), directed by Michelangelo Antonioni and starring Marcello Mastroianni, Jeanne Moreau, and Monica Vitti, will be shown in Caspary Auditorium Sun., Jan. 10 at 7:30 P.M. Admission is free. All are welcome.

Skating rink revival

The Children's School is asking for volunteers in its effort to rebuild the ice skating rink. The rink, to be built with the help of the Carpenter

Shop, will be located over the tennis court and will be open to all members of the university and their families. A committee of faculty and parents would like help with fund-raising, construction, maintenance, and clean-up. Volunteers should contact Libby Hixson, x8580, or Martine or Philippe Moreillon, x8278.

Children's School applications

The Rockefeller University Children's School is accepting applications for 1993-94 for children ages six months to six years. The deadline for priority enrollment is Jan. 31. For more information or application forms, stop by the school on the ground floor of Sophie Fricke Hall or call the educational director, Marjorie Goldsmith, x8580.

Employee support groups

The Employee Assistance Program Consortium (EAPC) is offering two support groups to members of the Tri-Institutional community. The

first, for women only, will address issues such as relationships, finances, and childcare. The second, open to all, will address the difficulties of adjusting to New York City. Both groups will begin in late January and will meet weekly during lunch. Enrollment is limited. For more information or reservations, contact the EAPC at 746-5890.

Election

Alexander G. Bearn, a Rockefeller University trustee, was recently elected to the Board of Trustees of the New York Hall of Science.

Appointments

Assistant Professor: Sandra Handwerger, Tomasz lab;
Adjunct Faculty: Kalman Migler, Simon lab;
Research Associate: David Cooper and Wei-Qiang Gao, Hatten lab; Iddo K. Wernick, Goulianos lab;
Postdoctoral Associate: Hisham A. Hashish, Allfrey lab; Barbara Johnson, Cohn lab; Aleksander

Kaganovich, E. Cohen lab; Rodolfo Rivas, Hatten lab; Eric Viggogliosi, Muller lab; Karina Yazdabakhsh, Choi lab;
Postdoctoral Fellow: Lisa L. Dever, Tomasz lab; Rosario Mato Labajos, Tomasz lab; Yan Zhou, Kreek lab;
Guest Investigator: Rong-Xiang Fang, Chua lab; Gwo-Hwa Lee, Friedman lab; Christian Schlotterer, Desplan lab; Wei Weng, Breslow lab.

Departures

Assistant Professor: Dan Ts'o, Wiesel lab;
Research Associate: Xiang-peng Kong, Kuriyan lab; Tony Hayek, Breslow lab; Margaret McCarthy, Pfaff lab;
Postdoctoral Fellow: Isabelle Jupin, Chua lab; Han-Chul Kang, Tuomanen lab; Gary D. Weesner, Pfaff lab;
Guest Investigator: Jan Baggers, Steinman lab; Thomas Gorrell, Muller lab; Vijay Hegde, Wiesel lab; Raphael Monsalve, T.P. King lab; Guang Lin Yin, R. Darnell lab.