

5-24-1991

## NEWS AND NOTES 1991, MAY 24

The Rockefeller University

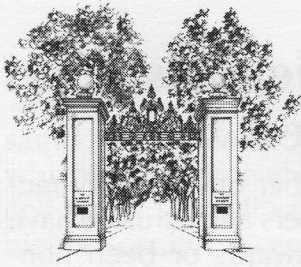
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# News & Notes

## Event takes look at how cells see 'the outside world'

According to psychologists, human beings only reach their full potential by achieving a paradoxical balance. They must be both autonomous—with a deep sense of their own integrity—and interconnected—with the ability to establish and maintain a network of relationships with the world around them.

It's the same for a cell. Each of the billions of cells in the body has a particular identity as, say, a liver cell or a cell in the heart or the pancreas. But to fulfill its individual role, and to maintain the functioning of the body as a whole, each cell must also respond to messages coming in from the "outside world"—the world of the other cells in the body.

Just how cells respond to that world was Professor James Darnell's topic last Wednesday at "An Evening at the Rockefeller University," an event for volunteers and friends of the university.

"Cells are sitting there with their arms out, sampling the environment and trying to interpret the outside world," said Darnell. The "arms" they use are protein receptors that protrude through the outer membrane that encircles the cell.

Each cell membrane is studied with hundreds, if not thou-



Leif Carlsson

Above, from left, Richard Schneidman, Chairman of the Committee of Trust and Estate Gift Plans Ted Terry, and Vice President for Academic Affairs James E. Darnell enjoy a break during the event.

## Search to appear with Pforzheimer grant

The summer issue of *SEARCH: The Rockefeller University Magazine* will arrive in employees' home mailboxes in early June. The second issue will feature articles on hunting the obesity gene, the quest for a malaria vaccine, hormonal effects on the brain, and biological clocks, as well as a historical piece on the discovery by Rockefeller scientists nearly fifty years ago that DNA is the genetic material.

The June edition also formally introduces the Publications Department's new photographer, Robert Reichert, whose work has been regularly appearing in *News & Notes*. Reichert's spectacular campus pictures will be highlighted in a photo-feature architectural tour of the

## Search (continued from page 1)

university.

SEARCH is now published with support from the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation (see April 19 *News & Notes*). Combining two of its main interests, publishing and science, the Pforzheimer Foundation has

given SEARCH a grant of \$150,000 to help defray expenses and increase circulation. The grant was announced in April by the foundation's

president, Carl Pforzheimer, Jr., who has been a member of The Rockefeller University Council since 1973.

"This grant not only will help us to cover publication costs, but will enable us to extend our audience to include additional college and university science departments and some secondary school sci-

ence departments as well," says Enid Goldberg, editor of *Search*. The magazine was conceived for several reasons, including improving understanding of science among the general population, and increasing awareness of scientific achievement at The Rockefeller

University among friends of the university.

Its current distribution list comprises not only the Rockefeller community, alumni

and friends of the university, but also college and university presidents, science departments, minority science career advisement programs and libraries. In addition, it is sent to members of the science and education committees of the federal, state, and city government. The magazine's total circulation is about 10,000. →→



## Ruttenberg will speak on Kurdish refugee camps

Alumnus Michael Ruttenberg, 1965 graduate of Rockefeller, has returned from a trip to the Turkey/Iraq border, where he assisted Kurdish refugees displaced after the Gulf War. Following the announcement of his three-week mission in *News & Notes* April 26, Ruttenberg received donations from a number of people in the university community. He will be presenting a lecture and slide show about his experiences in the refugee camps on Tuesday, May 28, at 12:00 noon in Tower 305. Everyone is invited. →→

## No N&N next week. June 7 is last.

There will be no *News & Notes* next week because of the Memorial Day holiday. The next issue—and the last of this academic year—will appear on June 7. During the summer, *News & Notes* will appear monthly until September. →→

## RU scientists honored

A number of university faculty members and a trustee have received awards or been honored by election to scientific societies in recent weeks.

Professor Emeritus **Christian de Duve** and Professor **Fernando Nottebohm** were elected to the American Philosophical Society in April. The APS, founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin, is the nation's oldest learned society, and is devoted to "promoting excellence and useful knowledge in the sciences and humanities."

**Richard A. Galbraith**, Medical Director and Associate Professor in the Kappas Laboratory, was recently elected to membership in the American Society for Clinical Investigation.

Professor **Attallah Kappas** received the American College of Physicians Award for Outstanding Contributions to Internal Medicine at the March meeting of the college in New York.

**Mary Jeanne Kreek**, Associate Professor, has been appointed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Louis W. Sullivan, to serve on the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration's National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse. Kreek researches the biological basis of addictions to opiates, cocaine and alcohol.

University Trustee **Philip Leder** has been awarded the A.P. Heineken Prize of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. Leder received the award for his pioneering research in molecular biology, immunology and cancer. →→



## Cells (continued from page 1)

sands, of different receptors, which vary somewhat among cell types, Darnell said. These highly specific receptors latch on to one particular substance, such as a hormone or growth factor, that transmits a particular message and prompts the cell to respond in a particular way.

Until about fifteen years ago, these essential cell components were virtually unknown, Darnell said. Since then, he added, hundreds of receptors have been identified, analyzed, and characterized. Much has also been learned about how these receptors act as part of complicated signal-transmitting systems.

Darnell reported on his lab's research to elucidate the signaling process for interferon, a substance produced by many different cell types in response to viral infection. Interferon can prevent infection in as-yet-uninfected cells, and sometimes even short-circuit an infection once it has begun. Interferon can also slow the growth rate of certain cells. Just as many different cell types produce interferon, so do many have receptors for it.

Though it links up with a cell at its surface and goes no farther, interferon's ultimate effect occurs in the nucleus, where interactions with DNA result in the production of new proteins. Darnell and his colleagues are close to understanding how interferon can exert this effect which, on a molecular scale, takes place "miles away" from its site of binding.

The researchers have found that when interferon binds to its cell-surface receptor, changes

## LARC is his legacy

Dennis Stark, Associate Professor and Director of the university's Laboratory Animal Research Center for the last 15 years, was honored at a going-away party Monday, May 20. He leaves the university at the end of the month to become Executive Director of Veterinary Sciences at Bristol-Myers Squibb Company in New Jersey.

Proclaiming that "LARC is no lark," Professor Emil Gotschlich praised Stark at the party for his hard work and many contributions to the university's "animal house." Osborn Bagg, Manager of Husbandry Services at LARC, presented his boss with a Waterman pen and a photo of Stark talking with animal rights demonstrators in front of the university in Spring 1986.

Stark closed the speeches with a brief one of his own, in which he thanked the many assistants and researchers he has worked with over the years. "This has been the most outstanding period of my career," he said. "I'm proud I spent it here with you."



Dennis Stark

take place in proteins waiting just inside the cell. These proteins are normally found in an inactive state. But under the influence of interferon, the proteins become activated, combine with one another, and move into the nucleus where they can interact with DNA.

"The proteins are transferred from an inactive form to an active form in seconds," Darnell reported. "This leads us to believe that at least one of them may contact the interferon re-

ceptor and may be able to identify the difference between an occupied and an unoccupied one."

The researchers have determined the DNA sequences that specify the proteins, which should provide a much greater understanding of their functions within about six months, Darnell reported. These results will add to the ever-deepening insight scientists are gaining into how cells "see" the outside world.

—by Susan Blum

## **Announcements**

### **Special Effects shows Thursday**

Ever go to the movies and find yourself saying, "How did they do that?" The Lunchtime Film Series answers that question when it presents *Special Effects* at 12:05 and 1:05 Thursday, May 30. In this 1985 film, the artists and technicians responsible for special effects in the blockbusters *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi*, *Blade Runner* and *The Right Stuff* take us behind the scenes for a look at how they created their movie magic.

### **Food Service notes**

The dining room on the 17th floor of the Tower Building will close for summer on June 28. It reopens September 9. The downstairs cafeteria will be open all summer and will follow its regular schedule.

Heath Braunstein, Assistant Director of Food Service, says a suggestion box has been set up in the cafeteria for anyone "with requests or ideas regarding menus or service." The box is located across from the grill station, near the front entrance.

### **Need help this summer?**

The Personnel Office has compiled a booklet of resumes from over 100 college students currently seeking summer employment at the university. This group includes students who wrote directly to the university seeking lab positions, as well as individuals who previously applied for the SURF Program. Those wishing to review the resumes should contact Mary Ann or Brenda in Personnel.



### **Convocation is June 5**

This year's Convocation will take place June 5 at 3:00 p.m. in Caspary Auditorium. The 1991 graduating class is the university's largest in many years: 26 people, including 14 from abroad. Attendance is by invitation.

### **Urushihara, Korevaar perform May 31**

The Tri-Institutional Noon Recital next Friday, May 31, will feature Asako Urushihara and David

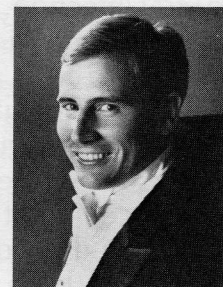


Urushihara

Christian Steiner

Korevaar in concert at Sloan House, 1233 York Avenue. Urushihara is a highly acclaimed violinist who was the winner of the 1988 Young Concert Artists

International Auditions. Korevaar, a pianist since age six, has also won various awards. Together, Urushihara and Korevaar will perform works by Stravinsky, Ravel, Ysaye and de Sarasate. The concert is free and open to all.



Korevaar

Peter Schaat

### **Cool summer sublet needed . . . for rabbits**

Smokey and Henry, pet rabbits at the Children's School, need a home for the summer. The school is not air conditioned, and since rabbits are extremely susceptible to heat prostration, a climate-controlled environment is needed for them on campus. Their cages are small, and Shari Zagorski of the Wiesel Lab will handle all the rabbits' needs. Please send a note to Box 50 if you can house the rabbits this summer.



**NewsNotes** is published on Fridays throughout the academic year by the Public Affairs Office of Rockefeller University. Suggestions for articles are welcome and may be sent to Box 68, or call 570-8967. Articles may also be submitted via electronic mail to *newsnotes*. The deadline for each Friday's issue is the preceding Monday at 5:00 p.m. The Rockefeller University is an equal opportunity employer and has an affirmative action program to increase the employment of women and members of protected groups at all job levels. Editor: Robert Brown. Designer: Patricia Sadiq.