

The NIH Record

World Health Officials Focus on AIDS

By Blair Gately & Lisa Datta

Dozens of NIH employees played a major role in the Third International Conference on AIDS held earlier this month at the Washington Hilton.

More than 7,000 physicians, researchers, epidemiologists, economists, government officials, and members of the news media gathered for the largest international scientific gathering to date on the growing AIDS crisis.

Among the topics at the 5-day conference were the search for a vaccine, the latest findings on the spread of AIDS, clinical trials for drug therapies, clinical management, and prevention and control of the disease.

Dr. George J. Galasso, Office of Extramural Research and Training, was the chairman of the conference's organizing committee. Dr. Kenneth Bridbord, Fogarty International Center, served as co-chairman.

"We worked for 2 years on the overall planning for the meeting, along with a number of other committees," Bridbord said.

Media relations for the conference, which was attended by 800 journalists, were coordinated.

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Puts Them in DRRiver's Seat

DRR Trains Minority Scientists

By Michael Fluharty

Born and reared thousands of miles apart and separated by generations of cultural differences, Dr. Antonio Alegria, Dr. Kenneth Boutte, and Wilford Denetclaw grew up sharing a common interest: love of science. But thanks to their participation as students in the Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) program, two have already earned doctorates in the biomedical sciences and all three have promising careers in biomedical research.

Denetclaw, a Navajo Indian working on his Ph.D. dissertation in cellular and developmental biology at the University of California at Berkeley, reflects their collective attitude: without the opportunities and support provided by the MBRS program, he's not sure he could become a research scientist.

Fifteen and Still Growing

Fifteen years ago this June Alegria and Boutte were among the first students in the MBRS

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Too Many Brain Cells Can Make You Dense

Scientists are Learning How Fewer Cells Make the Brain Work Better

By Leslie Fink

Biology shapes the brain sort of the same way Michelangelo sculpted the *Pieta*, according to a theory gaining popularity among neuroscientists. Michelangelo started with an ungainly chunk of rock and pared it down to articulating figures of infinite detail. Late in fetal development, biology takes a large conglomeration of brain cells and whittles out the most elaborate and precise communication network known.

This pruning process happens because, during development, our brains generate many more neurons—cells that carry out brain functions—than are good for us. During an early period of rapid cell growth, genetic signals tell neurons to grow and divide with apparent reckless abandon. "This results in a network that's not very functional," says NICHD neurobiologist Phillip Nelson. "Everything's connected to everything, and you have a poorly tuned system."

For the brain to work properly, many of these cells, and the connections between them called synapses, must die off—a slow process that generally starts around birth and lasts until we are about 6 or 7 years old. Studies have suggested that some brain abnormalities such as some forms of mental retardation result when the brain's pruning mechanisms go awry.

According to a report in the June issue of the *Journal of Cell Biology*, NICHD scientists have begun to learn how biology weeds out excess nerve cells and synapses to leave a tightly knit, functioning brain. The key, the report says, seems to lie not just in neurons but also in another type of brain cell called glia. Although glia cells have no direct nerve activity, they help support the brain's neural network. The new study suggests that a brain hormone and electrical activity of nerve cells stimulate glia cells to secrete substances that help decide which neurons shall live and which shall die.

(See BRAIN, Page 2)



With Sister Mary Carl Malmstrom, director of the MBRS program at Xavier University, are John Harris and Richele Theodore. John, who is currently a graduate student in chemistry at Texas A&M University, helped conduct MBRS research in the area of x-ray crystallography while at Xavier. Richele, who will enroll at Texas A&M in the fall as a biochemistry graduate student, worked under the direction of Sister Mary Carl in research involving enzyme electrodes.

AIDS

(Continued from Page 1)

nated by NIH's Office of Communications, with the help of 85 volunteers from HHS information offices.

One of the most sobering predictions on the impact of the epidemic was that given by Dr. Jonathan Mann, director of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Special Programme on AIDS.

He said the WHO estimated up to 3 million new AIDS cases by 1991. Worldwide, the organization estimates that between 5 and 10 million people are currently infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the cause of AIDS.

"AIDS has created a worldwide emergency. Global AIDS control will require billions of dollars over the next 5 years," Mann said. "The disease has assumed pandemic proportions affecting every continent of the world, and further spread of the virus is inevitable. AIDS threatens all countries—there are no geographic 'safe zones' and no racial exemptions."

He emphasized the need for a global strategy to prevent and control the disease and outlined steps the WHO has taken, including formulating international research agendas, guidelines for public education, and a list of criteria for HIV screening programs.

The Public Health Service estimates that at least 1.5 million Americans are already infected with the virus.

At the conference, Dr. James Curran of the Centers for Disease Control predicted 270,000 cases and 179,000 deaths by the end of 1991.

In a session on the epidemiology of AIDS in the United States, Curran pointed out that the incidence of AIDS is different in some racial or ethnic groups. He said the rate of infection is three times higher in black and Hispanic communities than in white communities. He attributed the impact of AIDS on those groups to intravenous drug use.

Dr. Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute announced the discovery of a new related AIDS virus in Africa and predicted that others may be found. He said the original AIDS virus, HIV, however, remains the most virulent. The emergence of new viruses is ex-

pected to hamper research efforts to find a vaccine.

Dr. Samuel Broder of NCI reported on chemotherapy treatments of HIV infections, but cautioned against expecting too much from any particular drug.

He said the search for "the perfect drug"—one that will cure AIDS without serious side effects—should not hinder the development of "good" drugs which can prolong a patient's life or alleviate suffering.

Dr. Robert Walker of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases presented the first study of the drug azidothymidine's (AZT) efficacy in treating AIDS patients at an earlier stage of infection. AZT has recently been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of advanced AIDS patients with a history of pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, and patients with advanced AIDS-related complex (ARC).

FDA Commissioner Frank Young told a press conference that the agency is currently testing about 50 drugs to treat AIDS patients.

In addition to attending the scientific sessions at the conference, scientists from more than 50 nations attended poster presentations and roundtable discussions and viewed 60 exhibits by pharmaceutical companies, medical suppliers, health clinics and advocacy groups. □

BRAIN

(Continued from Page 1)

"We focused on the role of glia cells because, since they're in the business of keeping neurons happy, we thought they might release substances that affect neuronal survival," says NICHD's Douglas Brenneman, who headed the study. "I think we've got valuable information on how some substances participate in pruning back excess neurons to get the final, functional architecture of the brain."

To get a handle on how substances produced by glia cells might in turn regulate nerve cell survival, Brenneman and his colleagues first looked at a hormone known as vasoactive intestinal peptide, or VIP. Working neurons in the developing brain secrete VIP during electrical activity. Although scientists know VIP has several functions in the gut, the hormone was only recently discovered in the brain, and its role there is mostly a mystery.

But Brenneman and his colleagues got a clue from their earlier studies of VIP. They had exposed a mixture of mouse brain cells grown in a culture dish to a chemical that blocks electrical activity in nerve cells. Without electrical activity, nerve cells in the mixture died. The sci-

entists then added both the chemical and VIP to the cell cultures, and the nerve cells lived. VIP seemed to play some role in sparing nerve cells, even when their electrical activity had been blocked. Following that lead, the scientists began experiments to help them understand the links between electrical activity, VIP, and other conditions in brain cell cultures that influence nerve cell survival.

In the new study, the researchers grouped cells from the mixed cultures according to type. Then they added combinations of VIP and the blocking chemical to each of the different types of cell cultures. They found that, when treated with VIP, cultures containing only glia cells released a substance into the culture liquid that was later shown to prevent nerve cell death. Although the scientists have not yet identified this protective substance, and recognize that there may be more than one, these experiments suggest that the life or death of a neuron depends largely upon a survival factor produced by glia cells.

Cells Team Up

But neurons, electrical activity, and glia cells seem to team up during development to carve out a working brain. In many ways, says Nelson, it's a matter of natural selection. Survival of the fittest, whether in nightingales or neurons, is "the only way biology knows how to do it," he says. All of the neurons, the theory goes, compete for the survival substance released by glia cells. But some neurons may be in the wrong place, or may not be receiving the necessary environmental stimulation. These cells, according to Nelson and Brenneman, will die. Rather than "everything connected to everything" then, the remaining nerves regroup into a more specialized brain architecture.

In the human brain, the number of synapses is greatest at the time of birth and shortly thereafter. Then the pruning process gradually reduces the connections during our youngest years, when our brains generate a lot of electrical activity while taking in and dealing with an enormous amount of information. "This selective process goes on during what is probably the most important time during the development of the human nervous system," says Nelson. Because of the link between electrical activity in neurons, VIP, and survival factor(s) produced by glia cells, "information coming into the brain may determine what the person's going to have to work with for the rest of his or her life. It's an exceedingly important thing to understand." □

AmFAR Honors Gallo

Dr. Robert Gallo, NCI, received an award from Elizabeth Taylor, national chairwoman of the American Foundation for AIDS Research, at a fundraising banquet held on the eve of the AIDS conference.

He was honored, along with U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and Dr. Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute, for his contributions to AIDS research.

Working Toward a Smoke-Free Society

NCI Launches Major Anti-Tobacco Effort

By Jeffrey McKenna

A plan for a new government-assisted effort to help communities become tobacco-free was the major outcome of a recent 2½ day scientific forum on smoking sponsored by the National Cancer Institute.

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, NCI called the meeting, attended by more than 200 top researchers and public health specialists in the field; they were to decide on the best ways to prevent and reduce cigarette smoking and tobacco use in the United States. It coincided closely with the new NIH policy to become an entirely smoke-free workplace by Sept. 1 (see *The Record*, May 19).

In his kickoff speech, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said that cigarette smoking is unique among the nation's public health issues because of the "air-tight" scientific case against smoking. Thirty years of research in more than 80 countries has yielded more than 50,000 studies documenting the dangers of smoking, Koop said. These studies are joined by more recent findings that exposure to sidestream smoke—the cigarette smoke that nonsmokers inhale from the air around them—poses serious health hazards, as does the use of chewing tobacco and snuff. The time has come, he said, to act on this evidence using every practical tool—research, public education, economic incentives and the militancy of nonsmokers—"to make the dream of a smoke-free society come true."

Other speakers joining Koop during the opening plenary session were NCI Director Vincent T. DeVita, Jr.; Dr. Peter Greenwald, director of NCI's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC); Dr. William T. Friedewald, NIH associate director for disease prevention; and Dr. Ernst L. Wynder, president of the American Health Foundation.

To accelerate progress toward both Koop's goal for a smoke-free society and NCI's goal to reduce the U.S. cancer death rate by as much as 50 percent by the year 2000, panelists urged the formation of community-based tobacco-free coalitions across the country. This recommendation was based on the results of 12 workshops in which participants discussed ways to prevent and end the smoking habit, particularly among youth through school-based programs; among other parts of the population—such as women, blacks, and heavy smokers—through targeted programs; and among the general public through public health programs involving mass media, physicians, and self-help methods for individuals.



For his leadership as chairman of the Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on the Health Consequences of Smokeless Tobacco, NCI's Cullen (l) receives the Surgeon General's Medallion from Koop. The award, the highest level of recognition by a Surgeon General, was presented during the recent scientific forum at NIH, "National Cancer Institute Smoking, Tobacco, and Cancer Program and Its Goals for the Year 2000."

Dr. Joseph W. Cullen, deputy director of DCPC and director of the NCI-wide Smoking, Tobacco, and Cancer Program, said the consensus reached at the forum "confirmed that we're ready in the field of smoking to move well beyond our current research studies and begin to apply systematically what we know will work. To make a real impact on smoking prevalence over the next decade, we have to reach into the fabric of America."

NCI now funds about 50 smoking intervention trials that affect 10 million people. "We want to multiply that number considerably," Cullen said. "While the research continues, the best immediate approach is to promote smoke-free environments through coalitions at the state, county, and large-community levels."

In this concentrated effort, NCI will seek grant proposals from entities representing a range of geographic areas to unite and direct the tobacco control resources in those areas to populations in greatest need. Examples of potential applicants include health departments, community hospitals, universities, health profession and health care-related organizations, and health coalitions.

The goal of this large community-level effort is to promote changes in the social and physical environment that in turn will influence individuals' tobacco-use behavior. It is based on ample evidence that the cumulative effect of multiple strategies to prevent and stop the smoking habit—using such channels as public

policy, schools, workplaces, and the media—is greater than the effect of any single intervention.

"If the community environment includes counter-tobacco commercials and laws, taxes, and special programs that discourage tobacco use," Cullen said, "the stage is set for individuals to decide not to smoke or to quit smoking." The project would combine all that NCI and other organizations have learned about influencing tobacco use behavior in communities across the country.

The details of this new smoking control initiative will be worked out over the next 6 to 12 months. According to Cullen, the project would be phased. Successful applicants would first go through a period of planning and community organization, followed by an operational phase.

Panel members also recommended additional strategies to speed the nation's progress against smoking. They called for promoting national, state, and local public policies addressing tobacco use; mounting a continuing broadcast media campaign to counteract the tobacco industry's \$2-billion-a-year advertising and promotion efforts; and encouraging physicians and health care facilities to take leadership positions in the movement toward smoke-free environments and the control of tobacco use. □

NIH Physicians Elected To Institute of Medicine

Three NIH physicians have been elected to the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, with terms beginning July 1.

New members are chosen for their major contributions to health and medicine or to related fields such as social and behavioral sciences, law, administration and economics. They serve on committees engaged in studies of health policy issues.

The three NIH scientists are:

- Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, director, NIAID;
- Dr. Alan S. Rabson, director, Division of Cancer Biology and Diagnosis, NCI; and,
- Dr. Steven A. Rosenberg, chief of surgery, NCI. □

MINORITY

(Continued from Page 1)

program. Created in 1972 by the Division of Research Resources with a mission to increase the nation's ranks of minority biomedical scientists, the program began with a \$2 million annual budget divided among 34 mostly black southeastern schools.

Minorities, says Dr. Ciriaco Gonzales, director of the MBRS program, have long been underrepresented in biomedical science. Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and other minorities historically have totaled less than 2 percent of this country's biomedical scientists.

Today, the program has a proven record of accomplishments: nearly 2,400 student and faculty investigators conducting almost 800 research projects at 100 institutions located throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico; and more than 1,150 graduates who have doctorates in the biomedical sciences, medicine, or dentistry.

Gonzales says he measures the program's success by former students such as Alegria, Boutte, and Denetclaw who are working for well-known companies, teaching at major universities, and completing postdoctoral work at NIH or at labs at Berkeley, Harvard, and other major institutions.

Congress has also recognized its success by appropriating \$28 million to the program in fiscal year 1987, nearly 14 times the initial budget in 1972. An additional \$10 million in cofunding is available from other NIH institutes and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA).

MBRS grants, says Gonzales, are institutional. Most grants are awarded to 2- and 4-year schools where minorities comprise at least half the enrollment. In 1987, 57 of the 100 schools receiving support are predominantly black, 24 are Hispanic, and the balance are schools serving American Indians, Hawaiians, and racially mixed populations.

Three general types of activities are funded in institutions. Most schools receive a program grant that supports an administrator and faculty research projects. Funds are also earmarked to provide salaries to student research assistants—up to \$4,200 for undergraduate students, \$5,604 for graduates—which give students like Alegria, Boutte, and Denetclaw with valuable "hands-on" laboratory experience while intensifying their interest in pursuing careers in biomedical research.

A second type of award supports institutional enrichment activities such as faculty and student travel to scientific meetings and workshops, and the opportunity to participate in research at off-campus laboratories. The third type of award, thematic grants, supports re-

lated research projects at institutions that grant doctoral degrees. Increased congressional funding in recent years has added two other categories of funding: support for shared instruments and to students who assist associate investigators at schools with less than 50 percent minority enrollment.

Annual Symposium Instituted

When the program began in 1972, an annual symposium was instituted to help students hone skills used to present research findings. This meeting has grown into the nation's largest forum for minority student and faculty investigators, and attracts prominent scientists—Dr. Rosalyn S. Yalow, Nobel laureate in physiology and medicine, spoke at the 1986 meeting—who, in addition to presenting the latest advances in their fields, discuss issues affecting minority science students.

"One of the most important points about the symposium," says Dr. Betty H. Pickett, DRR director, "is that it provides a forum for students and faculty who are gaining research experience through MBRS support to communicate their research findings. Participants can make platform presentations with slides and other visual aids, or poster presentations at which they interact with interested peers and faculty." This year's symposium, which will be held in Washington in October, is cosponsored by the Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) program and ADA-MHA.

The range and quality of research in which MBRS students are involved is impressive: investigators at one school are learning how viral genes cause disease in higher organisms by studying a virus that attacks plants. Scientists

at another have modified the chemical structure of an important anti-inflammatory and anti-allergy drug, greatly reducing its toxicity. Other MBRS studies have found evidence that diabetes adversely affects the nervous system of rats by interfering with the production of enzymes that regulate a vital neurotransmitter; in human studies, abnormal levels of this neurotransmitter have been linked to depression. Another MBRS-supported scientist is conducting research he believes will identify genes that cause the uncontrolled growth of cancer cells.

Three Local Programs

One school notably successful at developing minority biomedical scientists has been the



Kim Dunn, who participated in the MBRS program in 1984 as a graduate student in chemistry at Xavier University, has completed her M.P.H. in toxicology at Tulane University and has entered a doctoral program at the school.

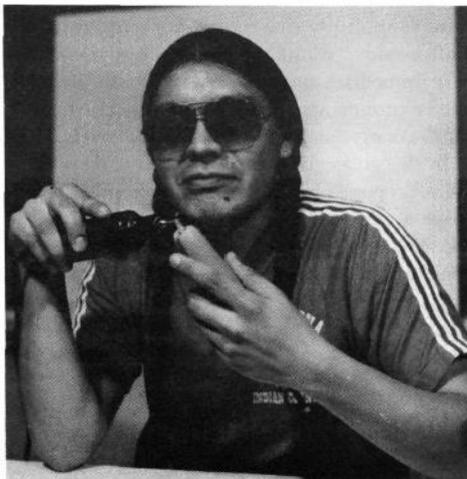
University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, which has 26 former MBRS students in addition to Alegria who have received doctorates.

Alegria, whose doctorate was in chemistry in 1976, is now the MBRS program director at Humacao University College, located on Puerto Rico's southern coast. He credits the program with providing him with financial support and a mentor who took interest in him and his work.

Like the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras, Xavier University in New Orleans was one of the first schools with an MBRS program. Sister Mary Carl Malmstrom, director of the Xavier program, says nearly half of the university's students are in science and mathematics programs and she attributes that widespread interest to a highly visible MBRS program.

"We cannot compete with Harvard or MIT

(Continued on Page 5)



Preparing a Navajo tooth for pulverizing and analysis for an MBRS-supported research project is Norman McGilbert, a student at Navajo Community College.



Three students involved in MBRS-supported research at Navajo Community College (l to r) are Marcai Nakai, Denetclaw, now completing his doctorate in biology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Maxine Begay.

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for research grants, but we can compete successfully for MBRS funds," said Malmstrom who adds that both students and faculty benefit from the grants.

"Students benefit from working with faculty in labs because they learn more about conducting scientific research, and faculty benefit because they get qualified assistants and the financial support needed to complete their research."

Boutte, who had another career in mind until introduced to the MBRS program as a Xavier undergraduate, now is a researcher and teaches biology at his alma mater. "I always wanted to go to med school. But when one of my professors, Dr. Portia Ashman, offered me an MBRS slot in my sophomore year I thought, 'Well, why not?'"

While Xavier University is a predominantly black school and the University of Puerto Rico is mostly Hispanic, Navajo Community College is an institution for American Indian students. Located on a reservation about 200 miles northwest of Albuquerque in Shiprock, NM, the college is a 2-year school run by the Navajo Tribe.

Program director Lora Shields says her students take great pride in acquiring skills that they can demonstrate. "People who understand medicine and science are held in high esteem on the reservation." But Shields says that, unfortunately, nearly 80 percent of Indian students are deficient in math and science because reservation schools are short on qualified teachers, equipment, and supplies.

"But through MBRS funding, we've been able to update and expand microbiology and

photographic labs, expand computer facilities, establish new science courses and increase our teaching staff."

Shields says it's made a big difference in her students who now realize that their futures are not limited to the boundaries of the reservation.

Denetclaw is one of the first to reach his potential. After earning a bachelor of science degree from Ft. Lewis College in Durango, CO,¹ he is now completing his doctorate at Berkeley. He says it's hard to believe he's close to what once seemed an impossible achievement. "I've worked hard, but that alone wouldn't have been enough," he says, convinced that the MBRS program deserves much credit for his success.

Doors of Opportunity

Antonio Alegria, Kenneth Boutte, and Wilford Denetclaw are success stories. Though each is a highly talented and motivated individual, as Denetclaw says, that alone isn't enough. In order to reach their goals, nearly all students need financial and emotional support as well as opportunities to prove themselves. And for 15 years, the MBRS program has been providing minority science students with that help.

By any yardstick, says Gonzales, the program is a success. It has opened previously closed doors of opportunity to an untapped pool of people and given them the chance to help find answers to human disease. While the benefits of the program to students have been great, the benefits to future research may be even greater. □

Camp Fantastic Barbecue

The 5th Annual Camp Fantastic Barbecue will be held on Tuesday, June 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. behind the Clinical Center.

For a \$5 donation you get a meal of barbecue chicken, hot dogs, potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans, potato chips, roll and butter, and beverage. The event is being catered by American Bar-B-Que and Catering.

Street Life will perform top 40 musical hits and clowns and magicians will entertain picnickers.

Donations help children with cancer attend Camp Fantastic, a summer camp for children ages 6 to 18.

Tickets for the barbecue are on sale at the R&W activity desk (Bldg. 31) and the R&W gift shops (Bldgs. 31, 10, 38 & Westwood).

For further information, call 496-6061.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and no later than 1 week before the event. □

Seminar Planned on Cell Communication

"How Cells Get the News" will be the topic of an NIH Science Writers Seminar to be held on Wednesday, June 24, from 9:30 a.m. until noon in Bldg. 31, Rm. 2C07.

The moderator will be Dr. Michael Gottesman, chief, molecular cell genetics section, Laboratory of Molecular Biology, NCI. He will discuss why the news—information transferred to and within cells—is so important to cells and also how cancer cells generate too much news or misinterpret the news they get.

Dr. Allen Spiegel, chief, section on molecular pathophysiology, Metabolic Diseases Branch, NIDDK, will explain how cells detect hormones, growth factors, toxins and environmental stimuli such as light and the common mechanisms by which this "news" is converted into signals the cell can understand.

How this information is used to help the cell make decisions about movement and other aspects of cellular economy will be described by Dr. Robert Adelstein, chief of NHLBI's Laboratory of Molecular Cardiology. He will also show a videotape of cells responding to specific signals with appropriate movement.

Science Writers Seminars, sponsored by the intramural scientists of NIH and the Division of Public Information, OD, are designed to provide members of the press with background information on the various areas of research conducted at NIH.

Because seating is limited, reporters will be given priority. Others wishing to attend should contact Bobbi Bennett, 496-1766. □

Lapel Pins Distributed

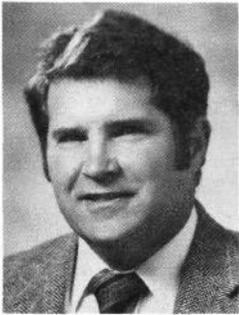
You may have seen NIH staff wearing lapel pins that are a facsimile of the "Century of Science for Health" logo of the NIH Centennial observance. These lapel pins were designed to commemorate the NIH Centennial and were first distributed at the Oct. 16, 1986, opening ceremony.

Due to the large number of requests for pins from NIH employees, the NIH Centennial underwriters purchased pins for NIH employees. The lapel pins have been distributed to all NIH BIDs for distribution. Please wear your pin proudly during the Centennial year.

The underwriters are American Home Products Corp.; Bristol-Myers Co.; Burroughs Wellcome Co.; CIBA-GEIGY Corp.; Eli Lilly and Co.; Hoffmann-La Roche, Inc.; Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Johnson & Johnson; Merck & Co., Inc.; Pfizer Inc.; Schering-Plough Foundation; SmithKline Beckman Corp.; Squibb Corp.; The Upjohn Co.; Warner-Lambert Co. □

NIH Director's Awards

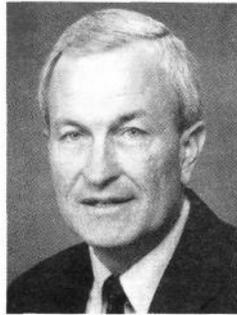
NIH Honor Awards Ceremony



Dr. Blair



Mr. Branson



Mr. Carlsen



Ms. Colaianni

DR. AARON E. BLAIR

Chief, Occupational Studies Section
Environmental Epidemiology Branch, DCE
National Cancer Institute

"For development of a systematic and imaginative program of studies of occupational cancer, which has advanced this entire area of science through its interdisciplinary approach."

WILLIAM L. BRANSON

Photographer (Still)
Medical Arts and Photography Branch
Division of Research Services

"For exceptional technical ability, extraordinary creativity, originality and insight into the photographic documentation of biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health."

ROBERT R. CARLSEN

Supervisory Contract Specialist
Contracts Operations Branch, DEA
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"For sustained exceptional performance, contributions and leadership in the contracts programs, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute."

LOIS ANN COLAIANNI

Associate Director, Library Operations
National Library of Medicine

"For foresight, leadership, and management skill in improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of biomedical information service in the United States."

Outstanding accomplishments of various staff members will be recognized by Dr. James B. Wyngaarden, director, NIH, at the Seventeenth Annual NIH Honor Awards Ceremony to be held Mon., June 22. All employees are invited to attend the ceremony which begins at 1:45 p.m. in the Masur Auditorium, Clinical Center.

The NIH Director's Award recognizes exceptional work performance by employees who have made substantial or exceptional contributions to the benefit of the programs of the NIH. In addition, two individuals who have made special contributions to the NIH will receive this honor award; Herbert James Bahre of Beckman Instruments and Robert B. Lanman of the Office of General Counsel, NIH Branch.

The Outstanding Service Medal will be presented to nine commissioned officers. This award recognizes officers who have either demonstrated outstanding continuous leadership in carrying out the mission of the PHS; or have performed an accomplishment that has had a major effect on the health of the nation; or have performed a heroic act resulting in the preservation of health or property.

The NIH Equal Employment Opportunity Award of the Year will be presented to Dr. Pierre F. Renault, deputy director, NIDDK. He was selected from among all



Dr. Dalakas



Dr. Dufau



Dr. Dwyer



Dr. Friedman



Mr. Ginsburg

DR. MARINOS C. DALAKAS

Senior Staff Fellow
Office of the Clinical Director, IRP
National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke

"For superior performance in the description of 'post-polio syndrome' and for superb contributions in the field of neuromuscular diseases."

DR. MARIA L. DUFAU

Head, Molecular Endocrinology Section
Endocrinology and Reproduction Research Branch
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

"For fundamental studies on the characterization of gonadotropin receptors, and for the development of sensitive gonadotropin bioassays and their application to important research and clinical problems."

DR. DENNIS M. DWYER

Supervisory Microbiologist, Immunology and Cell Biology Section, LPD, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

"For important research accomplishments in studies of parasitic protozoa."

DR. MISCHA E. FRIEDMAN

Associate Director for Referral and Review and Chief, Referral and Review Branch
Division of Research Grants

"For exemplary service to and gifted leadership of the grant application review procedures of the National Institutes of Health."

ROBERT GINSBURG

Grants Management Officer
Extramural Program
National Institute of Dental Research

"For highly effective direction of NIDR grants management affairs over the past twenty years."

Ceremony—June 22, 1987

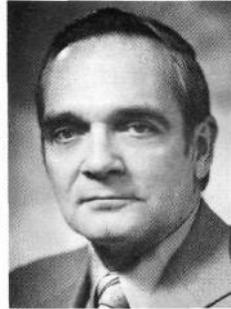
employees who had received BID EEO Special Achievement Awards during 1986 and were recognized for their on-the-job equal employment opportunity contributions, activities unrelated to performance of appointed position requirements, outside activities, and the scope of the impact of the EEO contribution(s) in the BID and the NIH.

The Harvey J. Bullock, Jr. Award for Equal Opportunity Achievement will be presented to Freddie L. Riley, NIAID. This award is made for significant contributions that result from an employee's particular effort(s) in furthering equal opportunity for all NIH employees; efforts made in establishing or strengthening communication between employees and management which results in furthering the equality, excellence, or equity of employees; contributions that have increased awareness and/or sensitivity of management to concerns and problems of NIH employees; combination of several contributing efforts or single non-recurring efforts; or contributions that have had impact on the upward mobility efforts for employees at the NIH.

At the ceremony, music will be provided by the Side By Side Band of the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department under the direction of Sgt. Robert Gross.



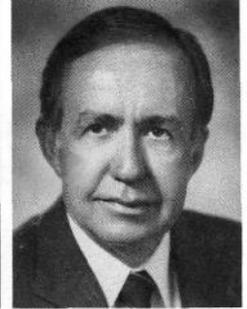
Mr. Green



Dr. Holman



Mr. Jessee



Mr. Laurence

JOHN E. GREEN, JR.

Warehouse Foreman
Division of Logistics, ORS
Office of the Director

"For exemplary work performance and for dedication to providing the best possible supply service to the research community of the National Institutes of Health."

DR. JOHN E. HOLMAN

Director, Laboratory Animal Sciences Program
Division of Research Resources

"For prominent contributions to the development and management of a program to improve laboratory animal facilities, and to the development of new animal models for human disease research."

ROBERT N. JESSEE

Utility Systems Repairer Operator Leader
Division of Engineering Services, ORS
Office of the Director

"For invaluable contributions in assuring that NIH meets the State and Environmental Protection Agency certification requirements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Animal Center."

L. EARL LAURENCE

Executive Officer
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

"In recognition of exceptional skill and leadership in the management of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases."



Mr. Lynch



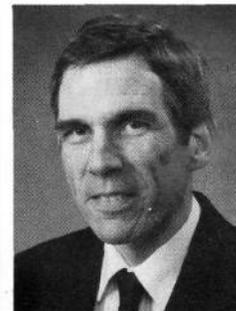
Dr. Morin



Mr. Murray



Dr. Parker



Dr. Rhoads



Ms. Rife

EDWARD J. LYNCH

Assistant Chief, Program Planning Branch
Division of Program Analysis, OPPE
Office of the Director

"For exceptional skill and competence in developing analyses of key policy issues for the National Institutes of Health."

DR. MARTIN L. MORIN

Staff Veterinarian
Clinical Center

"For exemplary leadership in working with NIH Components to design and implement procedures to achieve accreditation of the NIH Animal Care and Use Program."

RICHARD W. MURRAY

Library Technician
Technical Services Section, NIH Library
Division of Research Services

"For sustained and excellent work performance and for speed and efficiency with which library journals are made available to the NIH scientist."

DR. SYDNEY R. PARKER

Chief, Prevention, Education, and Research Training Branch
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"For effective leadership in development of programs in prevention and research training in respiratory diseases and for creative methods to evaluate and disseminate information on asthma self-management programs."

DR. GEORGE G. RHOADS

Chief, Epidemiology Branch
Epidemiology and Biometry Research Program
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

"For superior scientific leadership of the research program of the Epidemiology Branch and significant contributions to collaborative investigations with the Center for Research for Mothers and Children."

SANDA R. RIFE

Secretary to the Chief, Investigational Drug Branch,
DCT
National Cancer Institute

"For unusual dedication and outstanding performance of secretarial skills and responsibilities."

NIH Director's Awards



Ms. Ronan



Mr. Salas



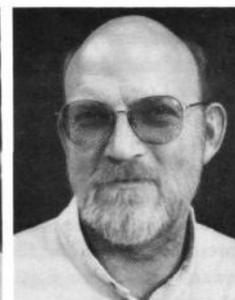
Dr. Salzman



Dr. Sogn



Ms. Sparkman



Dr. Swanson

(Continued from Page 7)

ROSEMARY RONAN

Chemist
Molecular Disease Branch, DIR
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"In recognition of consistently superior performance and exceptional contributions to the Intramural Research Program, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute."

ALFRED L. SALAS

Personnel Officer
National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke

"For outstanding efforts to further research in the neurological and communicative disorders through exemplary work in the field of personnel management."

DR. LOIS ANN SALZMAN

Assistant Scientific Director
Intramural Research Program
National Institute of Dental Research

"For sustained and solid scientific contributions to our knowledge of parvoviruses and for extraordinarily effective and sensitive science administration."

DR. JOHN A. SOGN

Formerly, Research Chemist
Immunogenetics Research Section, LIG
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
(Now with NCI)

"For derivation of interspecies hybrid cell lines and for use of these lines to resolve previously inaccessible immunogenetic questions."

DOLLY A. SPARKMAN

Chief, Programming Unit
Statistics and Analysis Branch
Division of Research Grants

"For solving difficult computer processing problems with ingenuity and goodwill, enabling the NIH to advance further towards full automation of its extramural processing system."

DR. JOHN L. SWANSON

Chief, Laboratory of Microbial Structure and Function
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

"For important research accomplishments in pathogenic bacteriology."



Ms. Taylor



Dr. Tennant



Dr. Trus



Mr. Vickers



Mr. Walker



Mr. Wehling

EARLENE S. TAYLOR

Budget Analyst
Budget Formulation and Presentation Branch, DFM
Office of the Director

"For superior performance in managing the budgetary aspects for the entire NIH research effort on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)."

DR. RAYMOND W. TENNANT

Chief, Cellular and Genetic Toxicology Branch
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

"For providing leadership to the Toxicology Research and Testing Program and developing objective assessments of short-term tests for carcinogens and mutagens."

DR. BENES L. TRUS

Research Chemist
Computer Systems Laboratory
Division of Computer Research and Technology

"For direction and leadership of the Image Processing Facility, Division of Computer Research and Technology, NIH."

KENNETH L. VICKERS

Computer Programmer Analyst
Office of Administrative Management
National Institute of General Medical Sciences

"For key role in designing and implementing numerous innovative and cost-saving data management efforts for the National Institute of General Medical Sciences."

FREDERICK C. WALKER

Personnel Officer
Office of the Director

"For dedicated service, exceptional competence, and significant contributions to the improvement of personnel management in the Office of the Director, NIH."

JAMES R. WEHLING

Financial Management Officer
Office of Administrative Management
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"For exceptional leadership in developing a modern financial management program responsive to the rapid changes and increasing demands of the NHLBI and NIH budget processes."

Outstanding Service Medal



Mr. Babre



Mr. Lanman



Dr. Amyx



Dr. Brinley



Dr. Brown



Dr. Cossman

(Continued from Page 8)

HERBERT JAMES BAHRE

NIH Account Manager
Beckman Instruments

"For 20 years of outstanding service to the NIH intramural programs in the area of instrumentation."

ROBERT B. LANMAN

Chief, NIH Branch, Public Health Division
Office of General Counsel

"For sustained performance in providing outstanding legal service to the National Institutes of Health on a broad range of important issues affecting biomedical research."

Veterinary Officer HERBERT L. AMYX

Formerly, Chief, Animal Health and Care Section, OD, IRP
National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke
(Now with NIEHS)

"For outstanding accomplishments in establishing centralized NINCDS animal services, and leadership in initiating the development of a model animal facility for all NIH Building 36 laboratories."

Medical Director FLOYD J. BRINLEY, Jr.

Director, Convulsive, Developmental and Neuromuscular Disorders Program
National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke

"For outstanding leadership in direction of the NINCDS Antiepileptic Drug Development Program."

Medical Director KENNETH S. BROWN

Research Investigator
Laboratory of Developmental Biology and Anomalies
National Institute of Dental Research

"For continuing investigation of animal models of genetic diseases and for establishing a transgenic mouse facility for studies on gene expression and gene replacement."

Senior Surgeon JEFFREY COSSMAN

Senior Investigator
Laboratory of Pathology, DCBD
National Cancer Institute

"For outstanding accomplishments in clinical and basic research regarding the biology and genetics of normal and neoplastic lymphoid cells."

Harvey J. Bullock, Jr. Award



Mr. Riley



Dr. Gaston



Dr. Littleton



Dr. Payne



Dr. Straus

FREDDIE L. RILEY

Technical Information Specialist, Office of Program Planning and Evaluation
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

"For identifying qualified minority candidates for employment at the NIH and for enormous efforts which have enhanced opportunities for minorities far beyond the NIH community."

Medical Director MARILYN H. GASTON

Deputy Chief, Sickle Cell Disease Branch
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"For excellence and outstanding achievement in implementing clinical research which will have a major impact on saving lives of babies with sickle cell disease in the United States."

Dental Director PRESTON A. LITTLETON, Jr.

Assistant Director for Program Operations
National Institute of Dental Research

"For important contributions to the future of oral health research and the operations of the National Institute of Dental Research."

Medical Director GERALD H. PAYNE

Chief, Prevention and Demonstration Research Branch
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

"For outstanding and dedicated leadership in the scientific supervision of several intervention and demonstration studies of national significance on reducing coronary heart disease risk factors."

Senior Surgeon STEPHEN E. STRAUS

Senior Investigator
Laboratory of Clinical Investigation
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

"For important basic studies of viral molecular biology and the development of effective antiviral drugs."

Outstanding Service Medal

(Continued from Page 9)



Dr. Western

Medical Director KARL A. WESTERN

Assistant Director for International Research
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

"For outstanding and sustained leadership in the planning and administration of international research activities in infectious and parasitic diseases."

Airline and Merchants Help Bond Drive Take Flight

American Airlines is helping the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in Research Triangle Park, N.C., get its U.S. Savings Bond drive off the ground by donating two free tickets to anywhere American flies in Florida, from its Raleigh-Durham hub. The tickets will be the grand prize in the NIEHS Savings Bond campaign.

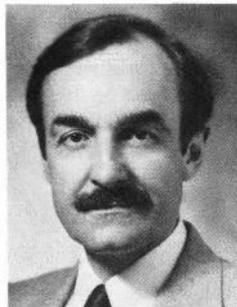
To help generate interest among institute employees, NIEHS' James D. Doyle, coordinator campaign, approached area merchants to donate prizes for a raffle at the end of the bond drive. Those who start a bond payroll deduction or increase their deduction will be entered.

Doyle's efforts paid off when American Airlines area sales manager Richard Kruszka donated the free tickets as the grand prize. Other area merchants who donated other goods and services as raffle prizes were: Slugs at the Pines restaurant; North American Video; Golden Corral Family Steakhouse; Photosolutions; Research Triangle Nautilus; Landlubber's Seafood Restaurant; and Finley Golf Course. Also, NIEHS employees donating prizes were Judy Edmonds and Dr. Ernest E. McConnell. □

Dyslexic Men Needed for Study

Men, ages 18-40, are needed for a study of brain activity at the National Institute of Mental Health. Participants must have a documented history of serious reading problems, speak English as native language, have no auditory impairments, and be in good health. For information, call 496-9070. □

NIH EEO Award



Dr. Renault

DR. PIERRE F. RENAULT

Deputy Director
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

"In recognition and grateful appreciation of leadership and outstanding contributions and support of the concepts and practices of equal opportunity and affirmative action."



Former NCI Employee Receives Heart Transplant

William J. Burras, Jr., 44, received a heart transplant at Johns Hopkins Hospital on May 18. Burras, an NCI employee for 18 years, was forced to go on disability retirement when he developed his illness.

Burras (Bill, as he was known by his co-workers and friends at NIH) suffered from cardiomyopathy, an illness that destroys heart muscles and weakens the heart.

He had been a candidate for a transplant since January 1985. He is recuperating in the intermediate care unit of Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he is expected to remain for approximately 8 weeks.

Cards and letters may be mailed to him at the following address: Johns Hopkins Hospital, Nelson Bldg., 8th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21205.

A fund has been established for anyone desiring to help him pay for his operation. The address is: Frederick County National Bank, Attn: Fern Poole, P.O. Box 240, Frederick, MD 21701.

Burras works in his office before the onset of his illness.

Speakers Announced for AIDS Workshop

Drs. Anthony S. Fauci, David Henderson and John C. Fletcher will help all interested NIH employees separate the myths from the facts about AIDS on June 30 in Masur auditorium from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. They will speak at a program entitled "AIDS and the Workplace—The Facts," sponsored by the Division of Safety (DS), Office of Research Services.

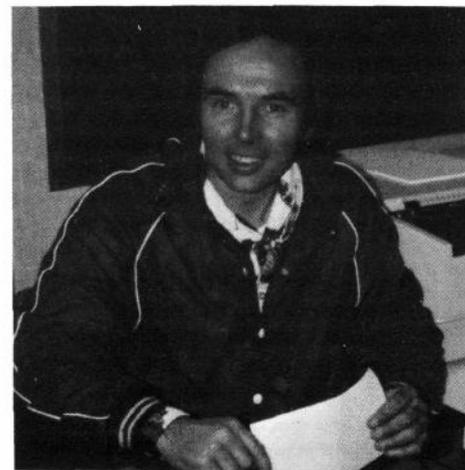
Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, will address from a general perspective key issues about the epidemiology of AIDS, risk of transmission, and infectivity.

In response to the recently reported cases of health-care workers' exposure to HIV in a clinical setting, Henderson, hospital epidemiologist for the Clinical Center, will describe the risks to health-care workers. He will also address the concerns of support services personnel such as animal handlers, housekeeping staff and other employees.

Fletcher, chief of bioethics at the CC, is frequently called upon to help CC staffers work through the complexities of assisting AIDS patients. He will address how managers and colleagues can approach the problems of interacting with persons with AIDS.

Anyone with questions—no matter how sensitive—for the speakers can send them anonymously to the Division of Safety, Bldg. 31, Rm. 1C02. There will also be time at the end of the program for questions from the audience.

The program will be videotaped and made available for distribution through DS. Members of the DS staff will be available to accompany the showing of the video presentation and answer questions raised by the video. Details regarding a schedule for its use will be published in the *Record* at a later date. □



TRAINING TIPS

The NIH Training Center of the Division of Personnel Management offers the following:

Courses and Programs	Dates
<i>Management and Supervisory</i> 496-6371	
Communication for Results	6/23-26
Successful Middle Management	6/9-11
Performance Appraisal Counseling	6/10-12
Conducting Effective Meetings	7/13-14
Interpersonal Relationships	7/15-16
Working with Personal MBTI II	6/19
Why Can't They Hear Me?	6/18
Management Tactics Clinic	9/19
<i>Office Skills</i> 496-6211	
Introduction to Working at NIH	6/17-18
	7/22-23
	8/19-20
	9/16-17

Adult Education 496-6211
Training and Development Services
Program Orientation 496-6211

June 16—Bldg. 31, Rm. B2C07
SHARE TRAINING: An online catalog is available by accessing WYLBUR. Enter SHARE TRAINING.
First time users only, enter:
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Cicadas Take Over

By Marilyn Berman

Cicadas, cicadas are everywhere
Flying high, flying low, in the air
Where are the birds? Where are the bees?
Where are the butterflies?
I don't see many in the skies.
Cicadas have taken over.
I gaze out the window and what do I see
Cicadas, cicadas in the trees
On the branches, on the windows, on some-
one's knee?
Yes, the cicadas have taken over!
Everywhere you walk, on the ground, on the
steps, in the bushes, on the plants
Their red eyes stare out—They ought to
be in pictures . . . The Cicada Plague vs. Ants.
Children are fascinated.
Dogs enjoy playing and think they are food.
The males sing loud and get mates in the mood
Driving through the park the sound is every-
where
Cicadas are really, really here.
They fly about like butterflies or tiny birds
but will soon disappear.
Goodbye cicada, it was fun, see you in 17
years.

NCI Presents Year 2000 Awards To Schmidt, Rogers

The National Cancer Institute has given its Year 2000 Award to two individuals whose work helped pass the National Cancer Act of 1971, and who have since made major contributions to the National Cancer Program.

Dr. Vincent T. DeVita, Jr., director of NCI, presented the awards during the institute's 50th anniversary observance to Benno C. Schmidt, managing partner of J.H. Whitney & Co., New York, and Paul G. Rogers, partner in the Washington law firm of Hogan and Hartson.

The award recognizes "exemplary support of the nation's Year 2000 goal: to reduce the cancer death rate by one-half."

DeVita cited Schmidt "for his role as the driving force in the establishment of the modern National Cancer Program, first as chairman of the National Panel of Consultants (Yarborough Commission) whose recommendations led to the National Cancer Act of 1971, and later as 'chairman of the board' during the first eight years of the program when he served as chairman of the President's Cancer Panel."

Schmidt's "enormous personal commitment and involvement helped establish cancer research as a national priority, leading to the research progress that has already benefitted people of this country," DeVita said.

Rogers received his award for his leadership in Congress. Citing him as "Mr. Health," DeVita said that "as chairman of the Health and Environment Subcommittee of the House, Mr. Rogers assured successful passage of the National Cancer Act of 1971."

He said that Rogers "was instrumental in strengthening the act in its later amendments, thereby creating and fostering a strong, flexible and effective National Cancer Program."

Schmidt chaired the Yarborough Commission from 1969 to 1971, then chaired the President's Cancer Panel from 1971 to 1980. He also served as a member of the President's Biomedical Research Panel in 1975 and 1976.

A long-time leader at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Schmidt is now vice chairman of the Cancer Center board, and chairman of the board of Memorial Hospital.

Rogers represented Florida's 11th district in the House of Representatives from the 84th through the 95th Congresses. He serves on the boards of the American Cancer Society and the Foundation for Medical Research, and is chairman of the National Council of Patient Information and Education, and chairman of the National Osteoporosis Foundation. □

DB2 Encore for Grants

The NIH Computer Center recently collaborated with NIA and NIDDK to develop two systems for grants management based on the DB2 database management system. In early March, the two systems were demonstrated to grants personnel throughout NIH. In light of the enthusiastic response, an "encore performance" has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 30, at 2 p.m. in Bldg. 12A, Rm. B51. The presentation will include discussion of the capabilities and flexibility of DB2, IBM's relational DBMS that has full Computer Center support, and live demonstrations of the NIA and NIDDK systems.

NIA's Fiscal Year Ledger System (FYLS) uses DB2 as the data manager for a full-screen data entry and update system. Concurrent update, data validation, and automatic backup/recovery are essential elements provided by DB2 in the easy-to-use FYLS system. NIDDK's DESKTOP system makes it possible for persons with little or no computer experience to generate sophisticated grants (IMPAC) data reports. A DESKTOP user indicates via a menu what data are desired, and then DB2's powerful data selection and report formatting capabilities build the customized report.

The presentation scheduled for June 30 is open to all who are interested in learning more about these DB2-based systems, computer users and nonusers alike. The success of FYLS and DESKTOP and the enthusiasm generated by the March presentations make it clear that there is valuable information to be acquired by attending. The presentation runs about 1½ hours, including the live demonstrations and a question and answer period. Seating is somewhat limited, so please contact the Computer Center, 496-9158, if you wish to attend. □

Singles Happy Hour

The NIH Singles Happy Hour will be held on Thursday, June 18, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the FAES House on Old Georgetown Rd.

Cost is \$2 for members; \$3 nonmembers.

For further information, call Judy Welsh, 496-6149. □

Library Needs Help

The bindery that serves the NIH Library has lost a 1986 volume of a journal very heavily used by NIH investigators: *Biochemical Journal* (Vol. 237).

The Library has been unable to obtain a replacement. Any NIH unit or employee who has any issues of Vol. 237 that may be discarded is asked to give them to the NIH Library. Please call Lisa Wu, 496-3527. □

Cicada Madness Hits NIH

I Was a Teenage Cicada

By Rich McManus

"You say ci-CAY-da, I say ci-CAH-da, let's turn the darned things off." New lyrics to an old song? No, just a reaction to the ubiquity of the 17-year cicada, a creature whose rare fortune it is to emerge a teenager then proceed to live like one—sing, mate and die.

That's much too harsh an analysis of both the cicada and the teen, both of which are hardy breeds that no one can do anything about.

I happen to like both species. Both grow fast, changing overnight. A cicada sprouts wings and a teenager grows a driver's license. These adaptations eventually allow there to be other teenagers and other cicadas, in an ever-widening range.

Our purpose here is to talk about the cicada, a much duller fellow than the adolescent. As I write, bumbling cicadas are trying to influence my opinion by hurling themselves at the glass just beyond my nose. Building 31, evidently, is quite an attraction to them. Others of the tribe are gamboling in the tree tops, flitting from limb to limb like frisky guests at a cocktail party.

When they first emerged on a warm Sunday night in late May, the cicadas were wet and sluggish customers, wandering vaguely in the direction of things vertical—telephone poles, automobile tires, "No Parking" signs. This is an indication that the lowly cicada wants to lead an upright life. Light too attracts it, also a positive sign. Very shortly after acquaintance with plain air, however, and after surveying the habitat man has fashioned, the cicada abruptly reverses its heretofore moral course and becomes, literally, a litterbug: it leaves its shell clinging stiffly to whatever branch or bramble was most convenient when the urge to leave its skin prevailed.

In the next week of its life, the cicada recapitulates the history of flight. It starts with clumsy maneuvers reminiscent of the Wright Brothers and progresses in a matter of days to the era of Chuck Yeager, zipping about cleverly, though well within the speed of sound. The history of those cicadas lacking "the right stuff" is pressed into pavement everywhere. Every 17 years, our sidewalks and streets are transformed into cicada cemeteries, provoking passersby to contemplate their mortality.

A word or two must be said about cicada song, for here is where the insect is at its most hypnotic and enchanting. In the aggregate,

cicada song is a seamless, ringing rhyme. It can be abjectly lonely and even verge toward the scary. But it is most often content to lay back in the trees, somewhere between bark and leaf, framing the day with an elusive longing. Taken singly, the cicada's call is more like a phone beeper on the hip of a busy nurse—off and on all day long.

Though music is the cicada's great contribution, I like the bug because it is clumsy. On the way to work the other day I saw one land on a tire slick in the middle of Wisconsin Ave. Seventeen years a-growing and then to pull a stunt like that. You've got to love them.

Cicada Haiku

By Blair Gately

Cicada fever
its endless screeching disrupts
my recreation

The Brief and Violent Life Of the Cicada

By Lisa Datta

Well, what about the cicadas? When you step out the door these days, their swelling chorus drowns all other sounds of everyday, mundane life. When you get out of the car in the parking lot, you see people dodging them with some dexterity. Every once in a while some poor soul is unfortunate enough to collide with one, an incident that causes the individual to prance about, providing an amusing diversion for fellow workers. The cicadas are here in full force (or one might say they're back, since they have returned after an absence of 17 years).

To some people they might be a nuisance but I think they're kind of neat. It must be interesting to live 17 years of your life underground, dormant, in a dull, lifeless state and then to burst into the sunlight full of life, vigor, energy and make the most out of the allotted time.

They serve at least one useful purpose: they give occasion for philosophical reflection as people wonder whether they will be around for the next influx; those who have been around long enough recall the last time it happened. The 17-year cycle of the cicadas is one of those things you can depend on in life.

Cicadas provide a common topic of conversation in every office. Some people like them; others detest them. But the point is everybody

has an opinion. And for the few short weeks they're around, they replace the sweltering hot, humid Washington weather as the most frequently discussed topic.

People stare at them shielded by a windowpane. I have gotten the closest view of them in this way. I have stared one straight in its beady red eyes, trying to communicate with it. We must speak different languages.

If I were interviewing a cicada, I would ask it what it was like to be buried for 17 years and then to enjoy life so intensely for such a limited period of time. It would probably say that life couldn't be better and that it wouldn't trade its life for that of the average human being, who lives approximately 75 years above ground, much of that time spent in a dull, monotonous routine. The fact is that I envy the cicadas. Every moment of their brief lives is filled with activity and excitement. They live life at its peak and decline so rapidly that they never have time to reminisce, to regret past acts or to long for the "good old days." Cicadas are perhaps the most fortunate creatures on Earth.

Cicadas Are Womanizers

By Anne Barber

What sings all the time, flies around madly and can cause the most composed, sophisticated lady around to lose her cool? The answer—cicadas, of course.

What is a prim and proper lady to do if one accidentally flies down the front of her dress or crawls up her skirt? Miss Manners may have to add a chapter to her book and give us the proper response to these assaults. But she doesn't have to be in a hurry. She has plenty of time to write it because it will be 17 years before they will come back again for a visit.

In the meantime, the lady can only hope no one saw this happen as she vigorously shakes her dress and body to rid herself of this bothersome creature. And even if someone sees her after it has flown away, she will give them a look that defies anyone to say a word about her erratic behavior. She will lift her head proudly, continue on her walk carrying herself upright, staring you in the eye all the time, daring you to make a comment. And even the bravest of men know when to remain silent.

