

# Chronicles

Newsletter of the UCSD Emeriti Association

Volume I, No. 4

April 2002

## Reminiscences: Early UCSD History

*We are delighted that Herb York, UCSD's first chancellor, who is personally responsible for much of the early faculty-driven character of our campus, agreed to write this fine contribution to our series of personal histories by those with insiders' perspectives on this campus.*

### *Memories of My Early Days at UCSD*

—by Herbert York

The creation of a general campus of the University of California in San Diego in 1961 resulted from the confluence of two distinct but related sets of factors. One set consisted of **Clark Kerr**, his Master Plan for Higher Education in California, plus the emergence of San Diego as the third ranking metropolis in the state. The other set of factors was comprised of **Roger Revelle**, director of the already venerable SIO, his local colleagues, and their hopes and aspirations for greatly expanding academic activities in La Jolla, plus the hopes and enthusiasms of some of the community leaders. Both groups were equally determined that the new campus would be of the highest possible academic quality and they also agreed on Revelle's idea that it should begin with just graduate students, then customarily referred to as "building from the top down." But they had differing visions concerning eventual form and substance. Kerr and his colleagues called for a general campus, and they used Berkeley as its

model. The San Diego group had in mind a state-supported version of Cal Tech, possibly with an Occidental College added for breadth, but always with the major emphasis, sometimes sole emphasis, on research and graduate students. Some had an even more restrictive model: the Rockefeller Institute, which then had only Post Doctoral Fellows. Kerr still vividly remembers a Senate meeting in La Jolla—well before I arrived on the scene—where he used Berkeley as the model for what should be built here, to which one of the local faculty replied "do you mean you want us to stoop to the level of Berkeley!?" In my view this difference over the appropriate model—now largely forgotten—had as big an effect on the future course of events as did the oft-cited **Revelle/Pauley** argument over location.

While all this was going on in California, I was finishing my service as a senior official in the Pentagon. I had been invited by Secretary-Designate **Robert McNamara** to stay on,

but the lingering effects of a heart attack a few months earlier made it easy for me to decide I wanted to return to California. I informed Kerr of this several months before the 1960 presidential election. He called back a few weeks later to ask if I would be interested in becoming the first chancellor at San Diego—I had had returning to Berkeley in mind, but I welcomed the new opportunity with enthusiasm. He also asked me what I thought the name of the campus should be and whether we should include a medical school. I answered: "UC San Diego" (not La Jolla), and "Yes." Shortly after, I learned, as **Keith Breuckner** so aptly described in an earlier number of this same newsletter, that the San Diego faculty "were all shocked and dismayed" at my appointment. This



“shock and dismay” dogged my entire first term as chancellor. Most of the faculty soon came to accept my appointment, but a substantial minority did not. Roger and I, despite his obvious disappointment in not getting the chancellorship, got along well from the beginning, and we later became good friends and teamed up in creating several new campus activities.

The difference over goals added further complication. I had been both a student and a professor at Berkeley, and I thought—and still think—it was the greatest public university in the world and a more than worthy model for our endeavors here. I also greatly admired Cal Tech but did not think it an appropriate (or even possible) model for a state university.

Setting up the Medical School presented a similar problem. A group of La Jolla faculty centered around **David Bonner** was already thinking about their ideal version of a new school of medicine. They wanted one of the highest quality and one in which a single biology department would fulfill the basic science needs of both the general campus and the medical school. They also wanted a school with a greatly augmented research function, particularly in molecular biology, and with a substantially diminished role for clinical faculty in both planning and governance, all of this at variance with national norms. The first of these ideas—the creation of a single all-purpose biology department—was widely acceptable, the others were not. To cope with this situation, I set up and worked closely with an advisory committee, which included clinical faculty from other California medical schools as well as some members of the Bonner group. This new committee played an essential and ultimately successful role in planning the new school, especially its clinical aspects, and in recruiting the first Dean.

In effect, my job was to lead in creating plans and recruiting faculty for these revised, and not universally popular, goals. And that, indeed, is

how I spent the next three and a half years. A recurrence of my heart symptoms finally led me to ask Kerr to replace me. In November 1964 **John Galbraith** succeeded me but before that happened I was able to welcome the first undergraduates and to recruit **Joseph Stokes** to be the first Dean of Medicine. Five years later, during **Bill McGill**'s first year as chancellor, he suddenly fired both the Academic Vice-Chancellor and the Graduate Dean because, he said, they had been engaging in a “turf struggle” he found unacceptable. He then appointed me to be the Graduate Dean and left the other position open. After another year he announced he was accepting the presidency of his alma mater, Columbia University.

The politics of the time made it impossible to move promptly on the appointment of a new chancellor. The world wide student rebellion was at its apex, **Ronald Reagan** was governor and had just fired Clark Kerr, and much of the local community was outraged by the presence of **Herbert Marcuse** and occasional Viet Cong flags on the campus. It was nearly impossible to find someone who was acceptable to all the essential constituencies and who could also do the job. The easy way out was to reappoint me as acting chancellor for a second term. (I think of this as being a rather rare event analogous to Grover Cleveland's two presidencies.) Expecting a long drawn-out interim, President **Charles Hitch** invited **Sybil** and me to move into University House for the duration.

I enjoyed my second term much more than the first. We were by then a real University. We had lots of real students, mostly undergraduates, but with plenty of good graduate students and postdocs as well. We had one of the largest externally supported research programs in the nation. We had a delightful athletic program. And the faculty was busily and productively engaged in teaching as well as research. For me, perhaps most importantly, we were just then getting Third College

(now Thurgood Marshall) underway. I have always strongly supported what we now call “Affirmative Action,” and participating directly in the recruitment of minority students and faculty, as well as more women, gave me a welcome opportunity to exercise this interest. Then as now, the policy modifications necessary to make all that happen were controversial among the faculty, but even so, we managed to open Third College on time.

After more than a year and a half, **Bill McElroy** arrived on campus as chancellor, and I embarked on a year's sabbatical. Soon after I returned, **Roger Revelle**, **Cliff Grobstein**, **Sandy Lakoff** and I created the Program in Science Technology and Public Affairs. This provided each of us with a way of working on and teaching about the things that most interested us, while at the same time providing a useful service to the Campus. Eventually a rather circuitous path led from there to the establishment of today's Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC).

Overall, I am enormously pleased with how it all came out, the Medical School in its current form included. My principal disappointment is that we have fallen short in creating an appropriately ethnically diverse faculty, one that would, as Chancellor **Dynes** has put it, reflect the community that we serve and that supports us. But in sum, I believe all of us together have succeeded in building the best University established in the United States in the post-war period, a University fully worthy of the pioneer visionaries, especially including both Kerr and Revelle. When **Dick Atkinson** and I sometimes talk about this he says, “No! UCSD is the best University, period.” But I still take the slightly less immodest view.

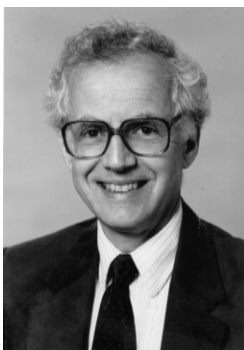
As my daughter remarked on seeing a draft of this essay, “There's nothing wrong with a little candor when you are over eighty.”



# President's Report

—by George Backus

It is my pleasant duty to welcome 15 emeriti who, since December 2001, have either joined our Association or decided to renew their memberships. Probably **Leonard Newmark's** *Chronicles* were a major incentive for many, and some new members have said as much. Leonard's energy has induced many emeriti to contribute to a personalized history of UCSD that will be of lasting value.



This month's Report is devoted to four topics: 1) news from **Sandy Lakoff**, our representative to the UCSD Committee on Faculty Welfare; 2) an invitation for us to interact with students; 3) the status of the hunt for lost emeriti; and 4) encouragement from the UCSD development office in our testing the waters about gifts to the Emeriti Association. A fifth topic, the amendments mentioned in my last report, will appear in the call to the June business meeting. At the Executive Committee's request, **Herm Johnson** put together possible amendments to the By-Laws that make very clear the questions you will be asked to decide concerning eligibility for membership and terms of office.

1) The UCSD Committee on Faculty Welfare discussed a proposed plan for "phased retirement" in which faculty could take early retirement, collect pensions from the UC retirement system, and continue to work part time and contribute to the retirement system. If adopted, this plan will impact current emeriti only through its effect on our pension coverage (which seems to be ample) and through our need to decide how or when to invite phased retirees to join our Association.

The CFW learned that UC's health insurance plans are likely to become more expensive. Co-payments will increase, participants will have to pay a larger part of the premiums, and coverage will be reduced. All this results from the collision of rising medical costs with a declining state budget. Health insurance for emeriti is paid out of the budget pool for salaries and benefits for active faculty, and IRS rules prevent such payments from the UC Retirement System. The initial state 2002-2003 budget allocation for employee Health and Welfare was 10% of the salary budget pool. It is now reduced to 6.7%. By 01/01/03, UC will implement personal medical accounts for active faculty, funded by pretax salary dollars. UC Faculty Welfare is looking into whether similar accounts can be funded out of pretax pension dollars for retirees.

2) **Kristi Shibata** at the University Centers invites the Emeriti to take part in a program she has organized to encourage informal interaction between students and faculty. Her description is below. Interested Emeriti should phone her at 858/534-3671 or e-mail her at [kshibata@ucsd.edu](mailto:kshibata@ucsd.edu).

"The University Centers is proud to present a Faculty Student Interaction Program titled 'The Last Lecture Series.' Professors are given the supposition that this is their absolute last lecture they are about to give to students. Following the theme of the novel *Tuesdays with Morrie*, we want to give students a chance to connect with their professors in a relaxed and intimate setting where there are no books, no grades, and no tests. Each Tuesday will feature different professors who will have a chance to share with students what they think would be the most important advice derived from their life experiences. Through this program, students will be able to learn lessons in an informal setting that can aid them on their journey of life. It is not so much the knowledge that is taught in the classroom, but the experiences and the relationships that have a lasting impact on their life. Professors lead these sessions in any manner that they choose. After the lecture, students can ask questions and enjoy pizza and refreshments. Past professors participating have included Dr. **Wolf Berger**, Dr. **Jim Arnold**, and Dr. **Mel Green**."

3) We continue to try to find lost emeriti. At the suggestion of **Sandi Pierz**, our Senate resource person, I approached **Erin Flanagan** in the Office of the Senior Vice-Chancellor. Ms. Flanagan has offered to help with some search procedures and says that UCSD itself would be interested in such a list. In the meantime, if you know of any emeriti who think they are not on our list, please let us know. Failure to receive the *Chronicles* has already led some emeriti to discover that we did not have their correct addresses.

4) **Cheryl Lohse** in the UCSD Development Office says that there is no objection to our soliciting gifts from our members without involving her office. She suggests that, if we find someone willing to contribute \$5,000 or more, we should ask for her assistance, especially since that donor may already be swamped with other requests. Contributions to the Emeriti Association are probably tax deductible charitable contributions, but we might need help from the Development Office to assure this and to provide the letters of receipt demanded by the IRS. As I mentioned in my last Report, the Emeriti Association is solvent in the short term. It would be reassuring, however, to have a cushion in case California's financial problems lead the Chancellor or the Senate Office to curtail or drop the subsidies that they now provide us.

# Psychology Comes to UCSD

—by George Mandler

In the spring of 1963, happily settled at the University of Toronto, I went to the biennial Lake Arrowhead meeting on human memory and wrote to old friends from Yale—**Bob** and **Sonia Hamburger**—that I would like to stop off in La Jolla and visit. Bob made an occasion of it by inviting some of the UCSD people, including **Jim Arnold**, **Jon Singer**, and **David Bonner** to a discussion of what UCSD ought to do in psychology. There had been offers out to **Charles Osgood** and **B. F. Skinner**, and I gave them some reactions to other possible targets. A year later I received a call from **Leonard Newmark** and arranged to meet him in New York to explore my possible interest in La Jolla. The follow up was by **Keith Brueckner**—then Dean of the UCSD faculty—who offered to come to Toronto and talk with me about Psychology at UCSD.

I showed the potential power of my organizational abilities when I picked up Keith from the airport and promptly lost my way on the drive to our house. Finally arrived, we spent the day sitting on the floor of our living room and hearing about plans for UCSD—first just faculty and research, then graduate students, and eventually undergraduates. We would “accept graduate students as colleagues and undergraduates would be like graduate students.” We then raised the question of my wife **Jean Mandler**'s professional possibilities in La Jolla. Nepotism laws were fully in force and she could not be appointed in psychology as long as I was chair. Eventually the university appointed her as a research psychologist in the Department of Biology, but not until 1972 did she become a regular member of the Psychology Department.

Psychology was on the cusp of a rebirth of energy and theory, as the new cognitive psychology took hold

and the behaviorist grip on theory and research was about to disappear. I was given an unusual opportunity. Recruitment started soon after Brueckner's visit. Its high point was a November 1964 meeting with some of my “targets” at the Algonquin Hotel in New York. Present were **Bill Kessen** from Yale, **John Lacey** from Yellow Springs, **Stanley Schachter** and **Bill McGill** from Columbia and I. We had a fine time planning our own UCSD but in the end only McGill moved to La Jolla. Schachter could not leave New York, Kessen agonized but was unable to abandon his ties to Yale, and Lacey—a fine psychologist and infinitely knowledgeable about the autonomic nervous system and behavior—came very close. He had an extensive interchange with the incoming neuroscience chair, **Robert Livingstone**, but it was not to be.

I had wanted a first-rate psychophysicist (i.e., sensory psychologist) in the department and had originally approached **Duncan Luce** at the University of Pennsylvania. Duncan wanted to stay on at Pennsylvania and he suggested that I try to get **Bill McGill**, then at Columbia and a major contributor to psychoacoustics. I had known Bill for some years—and thought very highly of him. He was immediately interested, and after protracted negotiations, Columbia finally came through with a counteroffer: a deanship. His response was to call me to accept the UCSD appointment, saying “Who wants to be an administrator at Columbia?”—a remark I would remind him of a few years later when he became president of that university.

Bill was my first recruit and we remained good friends for the next 30+ years, but his stay in the department was not to be long. In 1968 he was a member of the search committee to find a new Chancellor at UCSD as



successor to **John Galbraith** and the committee's final decision resulted in the appointment of one of their own: Bill McGill. By the following year he was approached by Columbia as to his availability for their presidency, which he accepted in 1970. Bill returned to San Diego in 1980 where he stayed until his death in 1997, working on his memoirs and even coauthoring a book on his old research interests.

My other initial appointment was **Norman Anderson**. Norman had a sterling reputation as an expert on method and on statistics, as well as being a creative social psychologist. He was then at UCLA and I had to get permission from the sister campus before approaching one of their faculty. Anderson was invaluable in his knowledge and also in his careful approach to our building problems. We also appointed a departmental secretary—**Jane Ward**—a rough and outspoken pearl—who never suffered any fools gladly, and found lots of them.

I had been appointed during **Herb York**'s tenure as Chancellor but by the time I arrived in La Jolla in 1965, Herb had been sidelined by health problems and Keith Brueckner had been moved aside. Keith had recruited me and many others, and had a major hand in building the university. He was a man impatient with incompetence and administrative folderol. He helped build the university but did not make many friends among the powers. He had a style (and success) that the pedestrian powers at the time

did not like, and in the usual academic power struggle Keith finally gave up and resigned his position as Dean in March 1965, before our department had even started. We had to be content with **Carl Eckart** as Vice Chancellor—an unimaginative, bureaucratic, and uncollegial pencil pusher, no matter what his scientific credentials, and **John Galbraith** as Chancellor—a well-meaning but ineffective man without vision. In a university that has named its buildings and roads after both obscure and visible, competent and incompetent administrators, there has been no room to remember Keith Brueckner's great contribution.

Psychology had been given some five or six slots to fill, and we needed to start planning the teaching program for the department, not to mention undergraduate and graduate degree programs. We also had to plan for our own building (jointly with Linguistics), and needed to get research space built and equipped in Urey Hall (temporarily until our own building was done). In between we helped (and repaid) other departments in their recruiting. And on top of all that, the three of us taught an undergraduate introductory psychology course that first year.

Recruiting went smoothly. Our first coup was getting **Dave Green**—a star on human hearing—from Pennsylvania, and he suggested that we also hire his colleague **Donald Norman**, which we did. I had met **Tony Deutsch** at Stanford in 1959 and was impressed by his intelligence and innovative thinking. We hired him and I agreed to take on his wife **Diana** as a doctoral student. I wanted a Skinnerian, a radical behaviorist who was nondogmatic and the name **George Reynolds** kept popping up. We met in the bathroom of a hospitality suite at a psychology convention and Chicago lost one of its lights. Bill Kessen suggested **Harry Munsinger**, a postdoctoral associate of his (who unfortunately did not live up to our expectations), and I wanted to get **Peter Lindsay**—a new Ph.D. at Toronto whom I had targeted before I

left Toronto.

In September 1966 these eight members of the department held the first departmental faculty meeting. I was in the midst of “commuting” to Washington to raise federal money for our building, for an extensive NIH training grant and other niceties. Thanks to Sputnik there was lots of money around. UCSD and its psychology and linguistics departments were in a hurry and in May 1966 we submitted and obtained an application for \$1.3 million under the Defense Education Act. We wanted to go ahead with the new building before the federal funding was approved, so the architects prepared a plan for two buildings, the larger one to be built with state funds and the small, connected annex to be built with Federal money—when it arrived. So we increased the building by 1/3 with federal money and were able to occupy it in 1970/71. We also had a reasonable number of graduate students and made three further appointments. **Bill McGuire** came from Columbia for 1967-68 to give us a major figure in social psychology. We also appointed two young men who later turned into stars—**David Rumelhart** and **Edmund Fantino**. And then we lost McGill to the chancellorship. Within a few years we were ranked as one of the top half-dozen experimental psychology departments in the country. With 13 faculty members we had 57 graduate students. I believe the current department with 25+ faculty has fewer than that now.

Looking back at the first 5 to 10 years of the department, we had achieved what we wanted, to build a department that was in the new spirit of American psychology—concerned with human thought and action and the processing of information.



## A Social Science Addendum

-by Leonard Newmark

**Seymour Harris** was the first professor in the social sciences at UCSD. Unfortunately, Seymour's idea of recruiting was to send out to all and sundry in the country a mimeographed notice to the effect that he, Seymour Harris, late of Harvard University, teacher and adviser to the Kennedy boys, had decided to enjoy the sun in La Jolla, and would welcome others to come join him. I remember talking to **Giff Ewing**, one of the wonderful hard scientists who were planning what to do about the social sciences here before I arrived in 1963. He respected economics, but was suspicious of the softness of the other social sciences (“psychology has never cured anyone”, “sociology is just pseudostatistics”), as were a number of others here.

When I was asked, as the next social scientist after Seymour, to make recommendations for proceeding in establishing social science departments, I traveled to Stanford, Berkeley, Chicago, Cambridge, and New Haven to talk to those social scientists that other social scientists thought were hot enough to attract the best people in their fields to come to UCSD. For psychology the choices came down to **B. F. Skinner** and **George Mandler**. We brought Skinner out here, but he looked down at what we were trying to do with our ambitious curriculum plan at the time (only Revelle College was to try to follow it) and we were not excited by him. George Mandler was just getting a name for himself as an experimentalist studying then-unfashionable areas of human emotion and cognition. He was controversial in the way this campus liked and had big ideas about what we could do here; he would fit right in with the other big thinkers, and **Keith Brueckner** easily succeeded in charming him to come.

## NECROLOGY

*Nancy Parke, a UCOP program analyst, has provided us with a list of UCSD faculty dead for whom the University Benefits Office has records. It was not an easy task for her, given the way those records are scattered—there is no master list—and it is not surprising that I was able to supplement her list with a few names out of my own memory: Henry Booker, Sigurd Burckhardt, Carl Eckart, Seymour Harris, and Norris Rakestraw. I think the Emeriti Association, at least, should have as complete and accurate a list as possible, so I hope that you will search your own memories to fill out gaps and correct errors still remaining in the following list and send the corrections to me: Ldnewmark@ucsd.edu*

UCSD Faculty with Date of Death (as of 2/22/02)								
<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>DOD</u>						
Alfven	Hannes	4/1/95	Fager	Edward	11/1/76	Mullin	Michael	12/19/00
Arthur	Robert	6/1/95	Fidler	Nevin	10/1/91	Neilson	Brooke	3/1/86
Baily	Norman	10/1/92	Fiore	Frank	8/1/93	Nickel	Vernon	2/1/93
Bazeley	Percival	9/1/91	Fox	Denis	9/1/83	Nierenberg	William	9/10/00
Bickford	Reginald	6/1/98	Frank	Hugh	10/1/99	Norris	Christine	9/1/98
Bishop	Erret	4/1/83	Freidenberg	Gary	9/1/99	O'Brien	John	2/1/01
Blume	Bernhard	7/1/78	Garren	Leonard	10/1/71	Perry	Clay	11/1/66
Bonner	David	5/1/64	Gluck	Louis	11/1/97	Peters	Ann	6/1/93
Booker	Henry	?	Grana	Cesar	8/1/86	Peterson	Melvin	9/1/95
Braman	Harwood	2/1/85	Grobstein	Clifford	9/1/98	Phleger	Fred	12/1/93
Brantingham	Henry	3/1/97	Halasz	Nicholas	7/1/99	Raasch	Frank, Jr	3/1/85
Braude	Abraham	12/1/84	Halpern	Francis	12/1/95	Raitt	Russell	3/1/95
Bridgman	Charles	1/1/94	Hansbrough	John	3/7/01	Rakestraw	Norris	?
Bullard	Edward	4/1/80	Harris	Seymour	?	Rand	Sinai	7/1/99
Burckhardt	Sigurd	12/15/66	Heiligenberg	Walter	9/1/94	Rappaport	Armin	10/1/83
Bush	James	9/1/85	Heller	Walter	3/2/01	Reissner	M. Erich	11/1/96
Butler	Warren	6/1/84	Hooper	John	3/1/89	Revelle	Roger	7/1/91
Butters	Nelson	11/1/95	Hubbs	Carl	6/1/79	Reynolds	George	9/1/87
Caldwell	Paul	3/1/76	Hughes	H. Stuart	10/1/99	Roberson	Robert	12/1/88
Calverley	Roderick	4/1/95	Hurt	Thomas	9/1/98	Saltman	Paul	8/1/99
Casalduero	Joaquin	4/1/79	Jackson	John	3/1/98	Sartoris	David	6/17/00
Christmas	Eric	7/22/00	Johnson	Martin	11/1/84	Saunders	William	1/1/94
Code	Charles	11/1/97	Kaplan	Nathan	4/1/86	Scanga	Italo	7/27/01
Cristian	Flaviu	4/1/99	Keyssar	Helene	2/5/01	Schiller	Herbert	1/1/00
Dashen	Roger	5/1/95	Kniazeff	Alexis	7/1/95	Schneider	Alan	5/1/84
Davignon	George	4/1/00	Lampert	Peter	7/1/86	Scholander	Per	6/1/80
Davis	Fred	1/1/93	Lettau	Reinhard	6/1/96	Scobie	James	6/1/81
Deluca	Marlene	11/1/87	Liebow	Averill	5/1/78	Shepard	Francis	4/1/85
Dilling	Margaret	5/1/97	Ma	Shang-Keng	11/1/83	Shibel-Conrique	Elaine	9/1/77
Eckart	Carl	?	Malmberg	John	11/1/92	Shimkin	Michael	1/1/89
Elliott	Robert	4/1/81	Matthias	Bernd	10/1/80	Skalak	Richard	6/1/97
Ellis	Albert	4/1/91	Mattson	Fred	5/1/97	Stern	Herbert	1/1/98
Engel	Albert	3/1/95	Mayer	Joseph	?	Stoughton	Richard	5/1/92
Enns	Theodore	1/1/82	Mayer	Maria	2/1/72	Strickland	John	11/1/70
Erickson	Robert	4/1/97	McElroy	William	2/17/99	Suess	Hans	9/1/93
			McEwen	George	3/1/72	Tappen	William	6/1/74
			Menard	Henry	2/1/86	Terrell	Tracy	12/1/91
			Moore	Stanley	12/1/97	Thomas	Charles	9/1/90
			Mortola	Joseph	1/1/99	Thompson	William	10/1/95
			Moser	Kenneth	6/1/97	Tisi	Gennaro	2/1/88

Traylor	Teddy	6/1/93	Wheeler	Henry	10/12/01
Tschirgi	Robert	5/1/97	Wickbom	Ingmar	8/1/87
Urey	Harold	1/1/81	Wiederholt	Wigbert	3/1/00
Van Atta	Charles	2/11/01	Willford	David	1/1/92
Verba	John	12/1/00	Williams	Sherley	7/1/99
Volcani	Benjamin	2/1/99	Wilson	Kent	3/1/00
Vold	Regitze	4/1/99	Wyman	Donald	3/1/87
Vu	Tien Pham	2/1/99	York	Charles	7/1/00
Warschawski	Stefan	5/1/89	Zobell	Claude	3/1/89
Watson	Robert	4/1/89			

The following continues the series of columns by our medical emeriti. —Ed.

## Age-Related Macular Degeneration a Leading Cause of Blindness

-by Helen Ranney, M.D.



In a recent issue of *Chronicles*, the news from the National Eye Institute concerning beneficial effects of antioxidant

vitamins and zinc for people at high risk of developing Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) was noted. This account is derived mostly from that report.

Dr. **Michael Goldbaum** of the Department of Ophthalmology at UCSD said that on the average 1/200 people over the age of 65 and 1/50 over the age of 75 will develop advanced macular degeneration with visual impairment. Treatment options for macular degeneration are still limited. This news release is about a clinical trial in which a benefit from a regimen of zinc and vitamins was observed, but only in people at high risk for progression of macular degeneration. Study patients were classified from number and size of *drusen* (drusen are small yellow deposits under the retina seen on ophthalmologic examination of retina through dilated pupil).

1) Early AMD: Several small drusen or a few medium-sized drusen and no visual loss.

2) Intermediate AMD: In one or both eyes many medium-sized drusen or one large drusen with little or no visual loss.

3) Advanced AMD: In addition to drusen in one or both eyes, a breakdown of light-sensitive cells in the central retinal area (dry form), or abnormal blood vessels under the retina that leak fluid or blood (wet form). Serious visual loss affecting central vision and the clear focus needed for straight-ahead activities like reading or driving may occur with either form of advanced AMD.

In the clinical trial, 4,757 participants 55-80 years of age in 11 centers nationwide were observed over seven years. They were divided among four treatment groups: 1) zinc alone 2) antioxidants alone, 3) a combination of antioxidants and zinc and 4) a placebo control. The nutrients evaluated contained 500 milligrams of vitamin C; 400 international units of vitamin E; 15 milligrams of beta-carotene; 80 milligrams of zinc as zinc oxide and two milligrams of copper as cupric oxide.

In the seven years of this trial, benefit was seen only in patients who

[Continued on p.8]

### Mark Your Calendar!

Emeriti Association  
Meeting 4:00-5:00 PM

April 25

Garren Auditorium  
SOM

**Daniel Yankelovich**  
“After 9/11 and Enron:  
Understanding the  
Impact”

Named one of the ten most influential people of the 20th century in the arena of public policy and research, **Daniel Yankelovich** has spent more than forty years monitoring social change and public policy in America. He founded his newest firm, Viewpoint Learning Inc., here in La Jolla just two years ago. The firm’s current projects include engaging Canadian citizens in dialogue on how best to revamp their health care system and engaging Californians in dialogue on how best to cope with future growth.

Well-known for having initiated the *New York Times* Yankelovich poll in the 1970’s, Yankelovich is also currently Chairman (and Founder) of a New York-based public policy “think-tank” (the Public Agenda) and a business firm that tracks social trends (DYG, Inc).

He has served on a number of corporate boards including CBS, USWest, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), and the Meredith Corporation.

His academic affiliations have included Harvard, NYU, the New School for Social Research, UC Irvine, and UCSD.

He is the author of ten books, including *New Rules* and *Coming to Public Judgment*. His most recent book, *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation*, was awarded the 1999 Common Ground Book Award for Achievement in Conflict Resolution.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Early Spring 2002

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*[Ranney, from p. 7]*

on entering the study had a high risk for progression to advanced AMD—patients with intermediate AMD and those who already had advanced AMD in one eye only. Patients in the latter group, with visual loss in only one eye due to AMD, have an especially high risk of developing advanced AMD with visual impairment in the other eye. Delayed progression of early AMD or improvement in vision of advanced AMD was not seen.

The results of the study indicated a 25 percent reduction in progression of the disease in people with intermediate AMD; that reduction declined to about 20 percent for patients with advanced AMD and visual loss in only one eye. Still significant but lower reduction rates were noted for zinc alone or for the anti-oxidant nutrients alone. No effect on cataract formation was observed. The protection is not great but it is significant for patients at high risk for AMD. The recommended

antioxidant doses of vitamins are higher than can be readily achieved through food: e.g., it would take a whole liter of orange juice to provide the recommended amount of vitamin C. Participants in the study seemed to have a slightly higher incidence of urinary tract infections. Patients with any kidney or bladder disease should consult their physician (if he/she can be found) before embarking on this regimen. And finally, in a trial done for another purpose nearly a decade ago, beta-carotene appeared to be associated with an increased incidence of lung cancer in smokers. No data are available on different dosages or combinations besides those listed above. The recommended zinc and vitamins are available at health food stores, but often not at supermarkets or pharmacies.

In response to my question about the inheritance of AMD, Dr. Goldbaum provided the following list of risk fac-

tors: family history, light pigmentation, smoking, and of course age. African-Americans have a much lower incidence of AMD. The appearance and enlargement of the mysterious drusen make the risk of visual impairment more immediate. If you have risk factor(s), an examination of the eyes for drusen seems reasonable. Only if there are many or large drusen should the antioxidant vitamins and zinc regimen be considered and even then, the regimen of many years duration should be discussed with your physician.

There are many exciting new research programs concerned with macular degeneration, and the treatment will surely improve in the future. Meanwhile, the antioxidant vitamins and zinc are examples of half-technologies in medicine—interventions that help, but do not address the cause of the problem.

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