Leading science writers to meet here next week

More than 130 science writers from newspapers, magazines, wire services and universities around the country will be on campus from Sunday, Nov. 5, through Thursday, Nov. 9, for a national meeting to discuss the frontiers of science.

The meeting, believed to be the largest contingent of journalists ever to visit Cornell, is being conducted by the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing, an organization of science writers. The meeting is open only to registered science writers.

Cornell is the host for the meeting, called the New Horizons in Science Briefing. The session has received funding support from International Business Machines Corp., Eastman Kodak Co., Monsanto Co. and the National Science Foundation.

"Cornell is honored to serve as host for this important meeting involving so many of the nation's journalists," Provost Robert H. Barker said.

"In an increasingly complex and competitive environment, our world depends more and more on advances in scientific understanding and technological innovation," he said. During the four-day conference in the Statler Hotel, the science writers will hear more than one dozen talks on subjects ranging from cancer to particle physics. Speakers will include scientists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, Carnegie-Mellon University and the Weizmann Institute in Israel.

Cornell speakers will include:

• Harold Craighead, National Nanofabrication Facility director, on new technologies for building ultra-small devices.

• Thomas Eisner, professor of biology, on a proposal to help save the rain forests by "prospecting" for valuable chemicals contained in plants and animals.

• Stephen Emlyn, professor of neurobiology and behavior, on the new understanding of sociobiology.

• Robert Richardson, professor of physics, on properties of matter at temperatures near absolute zero.

• Carl Sagan, the David Duncan Professor of Astronomy and Professor of Planetary Sciences, on science writing and science illiteracy in America.

In addition to the talks, the science writers will tour Cornell research facilities and projects in the Theory Center, Biotechnology Building, Department of Food Science, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell Electron Storage Ring and Center for High Energy Synchrotron Studies.

The science writers will be treated to a reception and dinner produced by students in the School of Hotel Administration.

— Dennis Meredith

Trustees approve library plans; work to begin this month

The Board of Trustees has approved the basic design of a major Olin Library addition and preliminary work is expected to begin in several weeks at the site between Goldwin Smith and Simeon halls in the southeast portion of the Arts Quadrangle.

The project, which will include about 25,000 square feet of additional space, is expected to cost about $25 million, will be built entirely underground; the site is to be restored virtually as before.

In approving the schematic design of Boston architects Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, the trustee Buildings and Properties Committee did express concern about the appearance of the four 9-by-9-foot skylights planned to admit light into the new space.

Though plans call for screening the ground-level skylights with trees and shrubs, the committee asked for more details on how this will be done. The architects will report on this and some other details in December, but the design approval allows planning to proceed.


While College of Arts and Sciences Dean Geoffrey Chester has said that the college faculty's "own strong preferences for a site contiguous to Olin Library were crucial to this [site] choice," careful efforts are being made to explain to the project's timetable and possible disruptive effects to that faculty and others on campus.

The arts faculty, for instance, was to meet yesterday with Paul Griffer, associate vice president for facilities planning and construction. Griffen said many similar meetings will be held throughout the course of the project.

In other action, the trustees:

• Ratified committee approval for building a 35-student American Indian House at Jessup and Triphammer roads, which may be occupied by the 1990-91 academic year.

• Approved a $121.8 million operating-budget request for the four state-supported colleges. The request, approved in September by the board's Executive Committee, asks the state for an $8.6 million increase, of which $7.45 million is to cover inflationary increases in areas such as salaries, utilities and maintenance.

Of the total request, the 1 percent for program improvements includes $350,000 for programs addressing "youth at risk." $274,000 for American Indian programs and $200,000 for a School of Industrial and Labor Relations program that helps small manufacturers improve their companies' profitability and efficiency.

Members of the Board of Trustees and the Cornell Council attend a reception at the Center for Theatre Arts on Oct. 26 as part of Trustee-Council weekend.

• Elected Austin H. Kiplinger, who stepped down as board chairman in July after 29 years as a trustee, a Presidential Councilor. "Mr. Kiplinger has led the board with a special sensitivity to the importance of arts and letters in undergraduate education and with unfailing calm, courtesy and fairness," President Frank H.T. Rhodes said in nomination comments that brought "a Renaissance banquet for the visiting science writers. See Page 3.

Eisenhower speaks during dedication of new OMVPE process

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$4 million lab will grow optical chips

A $4-million laboratory where minuscule streams of metal vapors will be used to grow crystalline lasers and transistors with control of their structure at atomic dimensions is being constructed by Cornell's School of Engineering.

Called the OMVPE Laboratory, for Organometallic Vapor-Phase Epitaxy, the facility will be key to Cornell's research in optoelectronics.

"Many aspects of the OMVPE technique for growing semiconductor materials were pioneered at Cornell," said Richard Shealy, assistant professor of electrical engineering, who is technical adviser for the facility.

"This facility, among the largest of its kind in the nation, is essential to developing this promising technology."

Support for the lab will come from government and industry. Government supporters include the Joint Services Electronics Program (JSEP) and the Innovative Science and Technology Program of the Strategic Defense Initiative Office. According to Shealy, JSEP, currently in its 13th year, is the oldest Cornell research program in high-speed compound semiconductor materials and devices.

"The new OMVPE facility will provide crucial new materials and devices for the ultrafast phenomena currently explored in JSEP's sponsored Cornell research," he said.

Corporate sponsors include General Electric Co., Eastman Kodak Co., Xerox Research Center, EGG Inc., Air Products and AKZO Corporate Research America Inc.

Optoelectronics, which combines optics and electronic components on single integrated-circuit chips, is expected to become a $100 billion-a-year industry worldwide by the year 2000. OMVPE can be used to build ultrafast electronic transistors; electronics can move much faster on a chip using the gallium arsenide devices built using the OMVPE process than in silicon, traditionally used as a basis for microelectronics.

Optoelectronic chips could become the basis for superfast computers, computer networks, ultrafast remote sensors and high-speed satellite and ground communications systems. Examples of such technology are the extensive fiber-optic communications systems. Continued on page 6