Audubon employees were recently alarmed by reports that the board had voted to auction off the society's library, which contains several rare works. Peterson says there is nothing to it, although the staff of the little-used library has been reduced to one librarian. Another source says the status of the library is uncertain and portions of it may be put in the custody of other libraries.

Peterson, who will be 68 in October, has held a dizzying succession of high-level jobs in the past dozen years, including directorship of the Council on Environmental Quality and of the Office of Technology Assessment.

He says his future plans are to focus his energies on his favorite problems: nuclear war, world population, development of renewable energy sources, and toxics in the environment. "I'm going to work like hell on them," he says. He also intends to write "the book."

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

NIH and Hughes Institute Form Training Partnership

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute are starting a cooperative research training program for medical students. Financed by the private medical institute, the program will offer about 30 students a 6-month to 1-year stint on the NIH campus in Bethesda, Maryland, where they will work with leading scientists in the intramural program. Students will reside in the newly designated Mary Woodard Lasker Center on the campus, in quarters that formerly were part of a convent (*Science*, 1 June, p. 969).

The new program offers Hughes Institute president, Donald S. Fredrickson, a former NIH director, an opportunity to renew his involvement there. For current director James B. Wyngaarden the cooperative venture furthers two objectives he has frequently identified as important. First, it should add to biomedical research a modest-sized but steady flow of bright young people with medical training. And, second, it offers NIH its first chance to participate in what he calls a "unique public-private partnership"—an approach he deems necessary for maintaining U.S. leadership in medical research and care.

—JEFFREY L. FOX

FDA Amending Regulations to Reduce LD_{50} Testing

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may inadvertently be perpetuating some uses of the LD_{50} acute toxicity test, even though the agency has said that the test is no longer required to meet food and drug regulations, according to an internal FDA committee. The committee reported, however, that FDA is clarifying its rules in an effort to eliminate all unnecessary uses of the test.

The LD_{50} test has long been a favorite target of animal welfare groups. It is used to obtain a crude measure of a compound's acute toxicity by finding the dose that kills 50 percent of a batch of test animals. Although it was once widely used in food and drug testing, it has been superseded in most cases by other measures. At a seminar last November, FDA officials maintained that the test is no longer required by the agency (*Science*, 9 December 1983, p. 1106).

A committee, established in January to review FDA's regulations and procedures involving the use of animals, has found, however, that LD_{50} tests are specifically required for batch testing of three antitumor drugs and that several other FDA regulations mention the test in a way that may mislead companies into believing that its use is required. FDA is considering eliminating the requirement for the antitumor drugs and is rewriting its other regulations, the committee noted.—COLIN NORMAN

Japan Plans to Look to the Stars from Hawaii

The Japanese government is expected to approve next month a proposal that would put Japan in the front ranks of optical astronomy. The proposal, which was formally submitted to the government on 21 August by a committee of astronomers, involves the construction of a 7.2-meter telescope on Mauna Kea in Hawaii.

The plan has already been discussed with officials of the University of Hawaii, and a cooperative agreement involving some shared time on the instrument is being worked out. Donald Hall, director of the university's Institute of Astronomy, is scheduled to go to Tokyo in October for further talks, and final Japanese government approval is expected to be announced then.

If all goes according to plan, construction will start in 1988, and the instrument should be in operation by 1993. The total cost is reported to be $82.6 million.

Japan's proposed telescope would be firmly in the international big leagues. The largest optical telescope currently in operation is the 5.7-meter instrument at Zelenchuskaya in the Soviet Union. The University of Texas is, however, planning to build a 7.6-meter telescope at its McDonald Observatory, and two more instruments that would use multiple mirrors to provide the equivalent of even larger reflectors are on the drawing board. One, equivalent to a 10-meter instrument, is being planned by the University of California and will also be located on Mauna Kea. The other, planned by a consortium including the University of Arizona and Kitt Peak National Observatory, will be a national facility and will be built either on Mauna Kea or Mount Graham in Arizona.

—COLIN NORMAN

Comings and Goings

After three and one-half stormy years as head of nuclear power programs in the Department of Energy, **Shelby Brewer** is leaving to become senior vice president at Combustion Engineering. An MIT-trained nuclear engineer, Brewer's tenure was dominated by battles over the Clinch River breeder reactor, which Congress finally killed. He was also engaged in a desperate struggle to pull the department's uranium enrichment business back from the brink of disaster when it was caught with billions of dollars of construction in progress just as the world market went into a slump.