

150

Ways

University

University

of Wisconsin

Madison

Madison

has touched

the world.

WITH THE FLOURISH OF A PEN on July 26, 1848, the state's first governor, Nelson Dewey, transformed ink into a university.



On that day, Dewey signed a bill passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature creating the University of Wisconsin and its board of regents. The law flowed from the Constitution of 1848, which provided for a state university and stipulated the university's first four departments: Science, Literature and the Arts; Law; Medicine; and Elementary Instruction.

Then, before even an acre of land had been acquired for the university campus, 17 young men met on February 5, 1849 — now known as Founder's Day — for the first day of the first class at the university. Led by Professor John Sterling, they assembled in a room at the Madison Female Academy, on the corner of Dayton Street and Wisconsin Avenue in Madison.

Thus was born the University of Wisconsin-Madison, one of the world's preeminent public research universities. That assemblage of 17 in 1849 has blossomed today into 40,000 students at a university

that's the third-largest producer of doctorates in the nation and the third-largest recipient of research and development funds.

The excellence of UW-Madison has reverberated through the lives of millions of people over many decades — that is fact, not hyperbole, as we will illustrate in the following pages. Through teaching, research and public service, the university has made itself felt in countless ways in Wisconsin and around the world.

But this booklet *does* count the ways — 150 of them, to be exact — to mark the sesquicentennial of the university's founding. They are not offered as the most important ways or the most anything, for that matter. These "ways" simply reflect some of the breadth, depth and complexity of UW-Madison's history and legacy. And they also say this: After 150 years, the university has done its founders and supporters proud.



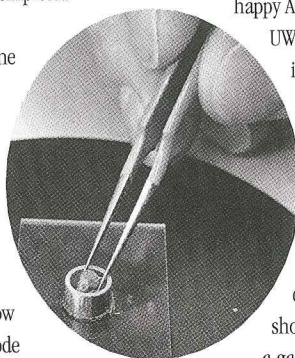
Nelson Dewey



You've never seen a sports arena quite like the Kohl Center, whose glass doors opened in January 1998.

142 Cracking the code

Most of us may only associate *Escherichia coli* — *E. coli* — with health risks, but scientists love the humble little bacterium. Its tremendously complex genetic makeup has made it one of the most studied forms of life on the planet. In 1997, a team led by geneticist Frederick Blattner completed the 10-year task of deciphering every one of *E. coli*'s 4.6 million base pairs, creating a road map of its genetic building blocks that has given scientists the most complete look at how strings of genetic code become life. With *E. coli* as their Rosetta Stone, biologists are now moving on to unlocking the secrets of even more-elaborate forms of life.



Mars meteorite

143 Mars attacks

Did Mars once harbor microscopic life? In 1997, geologist John Valley joined the international hunt for signs of life in a small meteorite from Mars that had smashed into Antarctica and launched a debate about whether life once existed on the planet. While the scientific jury remains far from a verdict, Valley's isotopic analyses have suggested that

the conditions for supporting life may have indeed existed on the Red Planet.

144 Undermining Alzheimer's

A finding by two faculty members in 1997 has opened the window to a possible treatment for Alzheimer's disease. Chemical engineer Regina Murphy and chemist Laura Kiessling have found a way to disrupt the proteins that form poisonous deposits in the brains of Alzheimer's patients. Murphy and Kiessling have designed "inhibitor molecules" that interfere with the poisonous clumping of otherwise harmless proteins, giving promise to a future treatment for a disease that now has none.

145 Better with age

In the next century, one in five people will be over age 65, and UW researchers are working to ensure that an aging America remains a happy America. Faculty at a new UW research center, established in 1997, are examining how some people are able to stay positive and vibrant throughout the setbacks of growing old. Involving more than 100 faculty from 45 UW departments, the team is showing how good nutrition is a gateway to health and happiness in old age, and their work is bringing us closer to cures for Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, eye disease and other problems that interfere with our golden years.

146 Altered reality

Perry Kivolowitz has made George Washington smirk, dogs speak French and humans melt into metallic puddles. Now he's teaching

those tricks to UW-Madison students. Kivolowitz joined the computer science department in 1998 to teach computer graphics, drawing from expertise as co-inventor of an image-morphing software called Elastic Reality. Kivolowitz won an Academy Award in 1997 for technical achievement, and his software's work graces 200 Hollywood films (and counting), including 1998's Oscar-hogging blockbuster "Titanic."

147 Cool Kohl

On January 17, 1998, a crown jewel of campus real estate had its coming-out party. Supported by U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl's \$25 million donation, the Kohl Center sports arena is an architectural knockout, complete with terrazzo floors, Portuguese limestone tile and a blown-glass sculpture bursting with color. The vital statistics: 460,000 square feet, 17,142 seating capacity, 26 bathrooms, 18 concession stands, complete disability access and — thanks to unique cantilevered decks — zero bad seats.

148 Equal-opportunity computing

Nearly every operating system for computers today — from Macintosh to Windows 95/98 — has built-in disability-access features designed by UW's Trace Research and Development Center. Rejecting the idea that people with disabilities need separate technology, UW engineers have blazed the trail with unique products for people with hearing, visual or physical disabilities. Now the center is making information kiosks, ATM machines, the World Wide Web, and mobile computers and phones usable by everyone.



Courtesy of Avid Technology, Inc.