

## Noyes Laboratory and Astronomy; “Critters”

William H. Gumprecht

Class of 1953

Some of the 1953 senior organic majors did their thesis work, under the directions of Prof. E.C. Taylor, in a large lab in the 4th floor corner of Noyes Lab catty-corner from what was then the Chemical Engineering Building. Many of us took astronomy as an elective that year. When the weather was good and the night sky was clear, many of us (NOT me) went out the window of this lab onto the roof to look for the constellations. (Prof. Taylor was rarely in his neighboring office at night and so was unaware of this risky practice.)

At that time, biochem stored animal feed near this lab. At night, the cockroaches that gorged themselves here would prowl the dark hallways. Since the roaches were humungous, to step on one constituted a slipping hazard. Also, it was a favorite prank of many of the senior male students to catch one, put it into a vial and then into one of the lab drawers of an unlucky female student. Her reaction was predictable.