Luedeke from page 1

slowly Rider has become more accept-
ing of all cultures.

“There was little I could do inde-
pendently because the organization
doesn’t work that way,” he said, empha-
sizing the collaborative nature of his job.
“We are an organization about people.”

Externally, Luedeke has met with state
representatives, worked with fund-
raising, and attended meetings.

“Our greatest need is to continue to
raise money from non-endowment
sources such as bonds, funds and grants,” he
said.

Rider has been raising money for its
endowment so that there can be more
stability in the amount of money the
university has and things can improve.

“We need new facilities. We’ve done
a lot over the past decade,” com-
mented Luedeke.

Improvements to Rider’s campus in
the past 10 years include construction
of the new Science and Technology
Center and the Admissions Building, as
well as major renovations of Memorial
Hall, Science Hall, the Student Center
and The Yvonne Theater. Rider has also
installed a comprehensive communica-
tion network for voice, video and data,
which has altered how teaching and
learning take place.

Also under Luedeke’s leadership,
Rider entered into an affiliation agree-
ment with Westminster Choir College
in Princeton that resulted in a full
merger of the two institutions in July of

Some facilities he hopes for are a
new residence hall, another classroom
building, a library in Lawrenceville and
a performance facility at Princeton.

Another improvement that Luedeke
would like to see is a change in public
perception.

“We think of ourselves as not being
as high in stature. That’s not justifi-
able,” he said.

It goes unnoticed frequently that
Rider has great education, business and
music programs that all have a high
accreditation.

“We need to continue to raise pub-
lic perception to conform to reality,”
said Luedeke.

Rider has other strong points that
Luedeke was very proud to mention.

“I think Rider is a very non-preten-
tious kind of culture,” he said. “The cul-
ture in a sense is unlike so many other
colleges and universities.”

He hopes that Rider will continue to
be accepting and open.

“Students call me by my first name,”
he said. “It’s a comfortable and friendly
feel, also with faculty and staff.”

Luedeke commented that the Rider
professors and other employees with
whom he works are thorough in their
jobs.

“They’re not motivated by what’s
quick and easy, but by what’s good for
the students,” he said.

Students’ success seemed to be a
major component for Luedeke’s agenda.

“We try to get students ready to
enter a field and do well,” said Luedeke.

“If they’re good when they come here
they can be successful.”

In addition to his other duties,
Luedeke teaches a freshman seminar:
Luedeke is driven by the possibili-
ties for situations and working together
with everyone.

“I got people to generally agree to
an agenda — then things happen,” said
Luedeke. “We’ve seen nice improve-
ments in the campus itself, little by
little.”

One of the significant changes on
campus has actually been women’s
sports.

“We have four women’s sports. Now
we have 10 mens’ and 10 womens’,” he
said. “I enjoy both.”

In general, Luedeke was left with a
good feeling about Rider.

“If the environment is generally
pretty good, then the positive spikes
aren’t as noticeable, because it’s the
norm,” he said.

But, if asked to be specific about
memorable events, Luedeke said he will
always remember the day that Rider
became a University. It was March
23, 1994, which also happened to be
Luedeke’s birthday.

Other proud occurrences include
Rider sports and Daly’s renovations.

“Most memories aren’t really spe-
cific,” he said. “It’s the many terrific
people I’ve encountered all along in 30-
some years.”

Now that he is resigning, Luedeke
looks forward to Rider’s future.

“I told the Board I’d resign because
I feel strongly that an organization
needs a chance for renewal,” he said.

“Change is the point of my retire-
ment. I certainly hope there would be
an ongoing positive change,” he said.

“I do not want things to stay exactly
the same. I hope someone will improve
tings in their first year.”

One of the things that Luedeke
wants Rider to hold on to is its cultural
openness.

“I hope things with culture sustain
— I like that style,” he said. “I hope
Rider keeps that.”

Luedeke had some advice for the
students to keep open relations and
remain friendly.

“Welcome the new president and
meet him or her as well as you behaved
toward me,” he said. “Give him or her
a good chance to get a good start.”

On the other hand, Luedeke had
some advice for the new president.

“I want to know the students and
everyone else, make that an early
agenda item,” he said. “Then, introduce
the new agenda based on what you have
found in getting to know them.”

As Luedeke prepares to move
on, he has some ideas for his own
future.

“I don’t want to just completely
retire. I want to work with students
with teaching or maybe at a freshmen
center and help them grasp the college
experience,” he said.

One thing Luedeke does know is
that he doesn’t want such a demanding
schedule as he had with his presidency.

“I want it to be less. This job is
seven days a week and some nights. But
I’m not complaining. It’s what the job
requires,” said Luedeke.

His location next year is not definite
yet either. He has a son in Red Bank as
well as other options in the Midwest.

Overall, Luedeke will miss Rider
and he hopes to see it prosper in the
near future.

“Just be successful in getting people
to see possibilities and work toward
them, and then a lot can happen,” said
Luedeke. “There are a lot of good
people who want to see Rider prosper.”