→ IESI OF TIME

Two gongs sounded as the date indicator on the untested prototype of the Clock of the Long Now turned from 01999 to 02000 on New Year's Eve. "It was a moment of relief," says the clock's creator, Danny Hillis, who five years ago set his project in motion (www.longnow.org). This first working prototype (one in a series) stands 8 feet tall, weighs about 1,000 pounds, and is constructed primarily of monel, a naturally occurring alloy of nickel and copper. The finished version, designed to last 10,000 years, will reside adjacent to Nevada's Great Basin National Park on a limestone crested mountain populated with 5,000 year old pine trees. "The trees give perspective," says Hillis. "Ten thousand years really isn't that long."

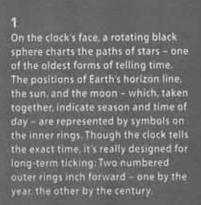
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torsional pendulum consisting of three 22-pound tungsten balls that, every minute, rotate 180 degrees clockwise, then counterclockwise suspending the pendulum wind and unwind, activating the clock's guts a binary mechanical computer with 27 bits. 5 registers, and 133 levers Sixty ticks of the pendulum send this central mechanism through a one-hour cycle, which causes the clock to recalculate the positions of its dials

two tubes, one on either side of the clock, falls slowly over the course of a month, generating the power that moves the pendulum. While this prototype must be "wound" monthly by

