

## BRIEFLY

### Bernard Lecture to link mathematics, baseball records

Mathematician Carl Pomerance will give a talk entitled, "Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Paul Erdős, and Me," on Wednesday, October 3. Pomerance, a number theory specialist, Research Professor Emeritus at the University of Georgia, and a member of the technical staff at the Bell Laboratories of Lucent Technologies, is appearing as the math department's 2001 Bernard Lecturer. His talk begins at 8 p.m. in the C. Shaw Smith 900 Room.

### Chapel Hill chemistry professor to give talk on the human liver

Professor Matthew R. Redinbo of the UNC-Chapel Hill chemistry department will give a talk Friday, October 5, titled, "The Structural Basis of Xenobiotic Recognition and Metabolism in Human Liver." The talk begins at 2:30 p.m. in the Thurman Room of Martin Chemical Building.

### Dean Rusk Program to host African musician Mamadou Diabate

Davidson College's Dean Rusk Program in International Studies will present a workshop and performance by African musician Mamadou Diabate Friday, October 5. A native of Mali, Diabate plays the *kora*, a 21-string harp from the Jeli musical tradition of West Africa. The workshop begins at 4:30 p.m. in the C. Shaw Smith 900 Room, and the performance begins at 8 p.m. in the same location. Both events are free and open to the public.

### A capella quartet to perform

The Scholars of London a capella quartet will present a Davidson College Concert Series performance Sunday, October 7. The Scholars have given more than 2,500 concerts in more than 50 countries, presenting Gregorian chant, masses, motets, madrigals, chansons, glees, folksongs, and contemporary music. For their Davidson College debut, The Scholars will present "500 Years of Song," a selection of sacred and secular music from the Renaissance to today. Tickets are \$10 for senior citizens, and \$15 for the general public. The performance begins at 8 p.m. in Hodson Hall of Cunningham Fine Arts Building. For reservations, call 704-894-2135 Monday through Friday between 2 and 5 p.m. Call 704-894-2357 for more information.

### Neurologist to deliver Smith Lecture

Neurologist Mary Bartlett Bunge will discuss her work in spinal cord plasticity and regeneration on Monday, October 8. "From the Laboratory to Superman: Repairing the Broken Spinal Cord," begins at 7:30 p.m. in the C. Shaw Smith 900 Room. Bunge is professor of cell biology and anatomy at the University of Miami School of Medicine. Internationally recognized for her work with the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, Bunge focuses her research and writing on the development and repair of spinal cord and other nervous system tissue.

### Concert Choir, Chamber Singers to give classical concert

The Davidson College Concert Choir and Chamber Singers will present a free, public concert of works by Martini, Morley, Pfausch, Pinkham and others on Wednesday, October 10. The performance begins at 8 p.m. in Davidson College Presbyterian Church.

Got an item that belongs in Briefly? All student organizations are welcome to submit their upcoming events. Please contact Lindy Baldwin (libaldwin@ davidson.edu) or Colin Eagan (coeagan@ davidson.edu).

# Gay-Straight Alliance makes debut

By EMILY DREW  
Staff Writer

After several attempts to form a solid campus organization for gay support, Alison Shea '03 has taken the initiative to organize the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA). The group held its first meeting on Sept. 26, and over 30 students and at least 10 faculty and administrators attended.

"It was great to see that kind of support," said Shea, who especially appreciated appearances from College President Bobby Vagt and Chaplain Rob Spach.

According to its constitution, the GSA hopes to provide a "safe space for those of diverse gender identity, and all lesbians, bisexuals, gay people, heterosexual allies and those questioning their sexuality or gender."

The constitution also holds that the GSA will provide a way for the GSA community to develop a positive self-concept, develop positive relationships, provide advocacy, increase awareness and acceptance, and facilitate dis-

ussion of current issues concerning the community.

To attain these goals, the GSA plans to provide relevant activities and programs on campus and also plans to co-op with gay and lesbian support groups and churches in Charlotte.

"It's really important that we provide this space for both gay and straight people to come together," said Shea. "It's a scary thing sometimes, when you live in a place where people do go out and hurt people due to their sexuality."

Shea said that Davidson is making huge strides in support of gays on campus. Specifically, RLO and campus security have stepped up support, and many advertise as supporters of the Human Rights Campaign, an organization that promotes equal rights for gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

According to Shea, at Davidson, there are fewer than ten students who are officially out.

"At Davidson, it's more reasonable to estimate that one out of 25 will question their

sexuality at some point in their lives," said Shea. "People who are questioning usually attend larger schools, like Chapel Hill, where gay support groups are more prominent."

Shea decided on Davidson because she saw an opportunity to deflate stereotypes.

"I knew it would be a challenge," said Shea, "but I figured I could take it. And there are a lot of stereotypes to dispel."

To help her cause, the GSA will sponsor speakers on "Homosexuality and the Legal System" and "Homosexuality and the Church." Planned for Oct. 8 and 9, the presentations will include current professionals and an opportunity for audience members to interact through discussion.

"There's a large divide of how people reconcile religion or law and homosexuality," said Shea. "There probably won't be immediate solutions, but it's really important that the differing groups understand each other in a respectful way."

GSA membership is open to anyone in the college community, and meetings are held at least once per month.

## Saxonhouse delivers Phi Beta Kappa lecture

By NICK ASMA  
Staff Writer

While reading Platonic dialogues, one must keep in mind the democratic nature of Plato and his underlying implications to the reader.

Such was the main message presented by Dr. Arlene Saxonhouse, professor of political science at the University of Michigan, who delivered the Phi Beta Kappa Lecture, entitled "The Politics of Reading Plato" on Sept. 27. Saxonhouse spoke to approximately 40 people, including many professors in the History, Political Science, and Classics departments.

A professor at the University of Michigan since the 1970s, Saxonhouse received her Ph.D. in political science at Yale University and has written several books on ancient political theory, including *The Birth of Political Science in Ancient Greek Thought*, and *Women in the History of Political Thought: Ancient Greece to Machiavelli*. A leading dignitary in her field, her current area of study includes investigations into how ancient political theory contributes to democratic theory and how gender in Plato's dialogues forms questions on traditional readings of his political thought.

For an hour in the C. Shaw Smith 900 Room, she discussed Platonic dialogues, drawing examples from numerous classical texts and citing opinions from other noted professors on the subject. Platonic dialogues,

she noted, require a "democratic reading of the texts."

Much of the lecture focused on the significance of dialogues and the often hidden intent of Plato and his work the *Republic*. According to Saxonhouse, every aspect of a dialogue from Plato demands keen attention to detail, form, and meaning. Early on she cited two styles of dialogue characteristic to Plato's writings. One, the "dramatic form, reads like a play, while in the other form, the narrative, the character begins the dialogue and narrates the entire conversation." Both of these styles were illustrated with examples from Platonic texts.

She continued her discussion of dialogue by describing how Socrates, one of the main characters in Plato's *Republic*, "makes himself look good in dramatically structured dialogue, whereby the tension comes from the dialogue itself. He also recites everything, which requires much stamina."

"The audience of the *Republic* is largely unknown to us, and this also affects our reading of the dialogue," according to Saxonhouse.

Unfortunately much of the reading of Plato prior to the 1970s did not pay much attention to dialogue, so the reader lacked a keen "distinction between Socrates and Plato's words."

Saxonhouse went on to discuss the views of several leading contemporaries of Plato, then critiqued their opinions.

The scenes surrounding the dialogue also

demand attention, she claimed, as they are often overlooked as well. For instance, in the *Republic*, "given the wealth of the hosts where the debate took place, the guests did not sit in the dark," but rather had candles to shed light onto their discussion. From them shadows were cast throughout the room, similar in fact to the shadows of Socrates' famous cave analogy.

In many classical texts, "the dialogue creates ambiguity which changes the politics of the dialogue to egalitarian and democratic."

Another main theme of the lecture was that of imitation, and the fact that "Socrates, the narrator of the entire *Republic*, often speaks through other characters and thus mixes narration with imitation." With this point as with all others, Saxonhouse cited specific examples from the text, even reading selected passages to emphasize her point. "Socrates imitates all characters of the *Republic* and becomes all characters he portrays. Because of the mixed narrative he becomes multi facet."

In the end, she claimed, "Because of the narrative style of the *Republic* and the fact that Socrates is a democratic character, he takes on multiple roles." Socrates is comparable to the democratic regime as both deal with issues of multiplicity and struggle to make choices.

Hence, "Plato is not an advocate of a closed society but an author who pushes his readers to democratic principles of ambiguity."

## Vandalism threatens the return of red bikes

### Red Bikes, from page 2

some bikes will not return to circulation. "Usually, [an irreparable bike] means a bent crank," Goode lamented. Needless to say, that kind of damage is not normal "wear and tear."

Alternatively, Hwang and Legerton suggested that use of the red bikes be restricted to students who register at the beginning of the year. DO would exchange padlocks for the combination locks and would require interested students to purchase their own keys. Goode speculated that under a "membership" system, "people will really lock [the community bikes] up."

Even if the bikes were available on a more limited basis, everyone closely involved with the program agrees that the real issue is students' attitudes towards communal property.

Goode expressed his belief that "Gener-

ally, we treat [the bikes] well, and they work well for everybody. Every once in a while, someone throws it at something."

SGA Vice President Beth Gardner '03 was more direct in her critique. "The problem is that when it's the weekend, [students] think that the Code of Responsibility doesn't apply," she said.

Legerton lent support to that notion: "From people who were involved in the vandalism, [it appears that] the place where most of the damage occurred was on the Court at night."

Gardner encouraged all senators to emphasize to their constituents the necessity of abiding by the Code of Responsibility and by the Honor Code. This includes reporting any infractions to the appropriate authorities.

Hwang asserted, "It's not just the people throwing the bikes off balconies; it's the people watching the people throwing the bikes off balconies."

The future of the community bike program

remains uncertain. While Harris vowed to have "more discussion" in the SGA until a solution is found, Goode recognizes another dimension to the problem.

Even when the red bikes are repaired, users have complained about a few "design flaws." In particular, the handlebars have a tendency to slip forward when the rider puts pressure on them. The springs under the seat have been known to "pop out" as well. Goode indicated that DO is working with Evan Kruppenbach from The Wheel to correct those problems.

If the red bikes are to ride again, said Goode, the staff of Davidson Outdoors will have to bring the bikes up to speed, and students will have to decide "how we as a community treat community property."

Not only will riders have to care for the bikes, but students will also have to make the extra effort to lock them up and report any abuse.