

# AIDS activist warns of dangers to college students

By NUSRAT KHAN

Richard Keeling, chairman of the American College AIDS Task Force Committee, addressed the controversial and frightening issue before the Davidson community on Tuesday.

Keeling believes that AIDS is being transmitted equally among heterosexuals and homosexuals, but in the past few years he has noticed a different trend.

"There is evidence to suggest that the transmittance of the disease has dropped in the general gay community," he said.

"It appears that unmarried, non-drug-using youth are at a greater risk than others in the present society." This population has been targeted for AIDS education in the United States.

Keeling focuses on certain high-risk groups on college campuses in his work. "At the University of Virginia we have given special attention to gay students and first year students. We have also paid extra attention to sex and sexuality issues on campus."

In trying to help the students to better understand the implications of this disease and to induce prevention measures, Keeling said that self-esteem and power are key terms.

"Students must realize that none of their aspirations of the world can be fulfilled once they get this disease. Therefore it is

important that they develop greater self-esteem and the courage and power to abstain from behavior that can shorten their lives," Keeling said.

Keeling was concerned about

the availability of condoms might make it increasingly difficult for young ladies to say 'no.'

Keeling replied, "I would regard that as unproven speculation. A strong sense of judgement is fundamental to protection, people should not try to use external excuses. When the issue is prevention, men and women should be ready to accept attitudinal responsibility."

When asked about the form of language that a college educational program must use so as to cater to the parents or to more conservative student conceptions, Keeling made it clear that the parents should be informed in advance of the college's AIDS program and policy.

"It should make its intentions very clear, and at the same time prove its unwillingness to subdue its efforts in any way under any kind of pressure--parental, student or from conservative trustees," Keeling said.

"If a program is not controversial but instead moderate and mild, it might as well be scratched off the plans, for such programs and proposals are useless. The key is a proactive relationship between the college, parents and the students. No one should be

caught off guard."

"Students should realize that one doesn't wear a seatbelt because he knows he will have an accident. Students must realize that they are too valuable to die, and taking a risk like this with such an attitude is asking for it."

Safe sex must be practiced at all times, for one single encounter could be a "wreck of life and sexual activity."

Every student has aspirations for success and a career, Keeling said. Each one of us lives with some hope and ambition from year to year if not from day to day. We wish to be attractive, sought after and popular.

But, as Keeling put it, "AIDS will interfere with all these hopes and destroy them." So it is a choice of either being prepared now or suffering later.

"Only a person with a self-defeating attitude towards life, whose life doesn't matter to him,

cannot withhold such information from a roommate. It is totally unethical and wrong. Perhaps even the state might forbid it.

"There is evidence to suggest that the transmittance of the disease has dropped in the general gay community," Keeling says.

"If they mean that they will talk to the student inflicted with the deadly virus and ask him to inform his roommate on an ethical basis and then leave it up to that individual, then they might be right."

Keeling stated firmly his belief that any student who knows he is afflicted with the disease has an ethical and moral responsibility to inform his roommate(s) and other individuals associated with him of his disease. "Failure to do so may lead to disturbed relationships which could prove worse [for the student] at a time like this," he said.

Keeling said that AIDS counselling should be available as it can fulfill "the one-to-one critical need of any student on campus. The alcohol policy committee



Richard Keeling, of the American College AIDS Task Force Committee, addressed the issue Tuesday night. Photo by Ben Yarbrough

students' ideas that Davidson is a small, safe, protective campus community where they have little chance of contracting AIDS.

"The size of the school does not in any way determine the risk of the disease on campus. Schools smaller in attendance size than Davidson have had a number of cases of the disease." He believes that such an argument is a "poor rationalization for those unwilling to face the facts."

Keeling said that condom machines are necessary on campus because some students are embarrassed to buy condoms at stores.

When asked if such a ready availability of condoms might lead to an increase in sexual activ-

## Q&A with Don Kimmel, professor of biology

Should Davidson have condom machines?

"Yes, they should be on campus."

What about AIDS education on campus?

"Education is important. So many of our students still answer 'yes' to the question that mosquitos can transmit the virus."

[12.3% of the 389 Davidson students who participated in a survey last year said, incorrectly, that mosquito bites transmit the AIDS virus.]

is justified to pursue any form of unsafe sexual activity."

Keeling's emphasis is therefore on "self esteem development and adherence to safer sexual practices."

Addressing the Davidson College AIDS policy of not informing roommates of the other's con-

and the human resources center should institute some form of an AIDS training program just as at UVa."

"Students can best educate students; peer education is the best form of education on such a topic. Students are more open and direct with peers."

## Heading south for the holidays—International style

By ANJALI SHARMA

This winter break, Jan-Joost Bouwman from the Netherlands and Francis Brunet and Sebastien Douzal from France took to the road in a rented car to tour Southern cities. These adventurous internationals did not expect that driving in America would include getting stuck in the sand in Panama City or dodging dead animals on the road along the Mississippi.

But what the sights they saw! For example, take the Dansville, Constitution Square, where a replica of the original Kentucky State Constitution was drawn. Jan-Joost called it "a nice old building with a big coke machine in the center."

Or consider the normally pleasant Broadway Street in Nashville on Christmas eve. Jan-Joost said the "drunks,"

closed music shops and open red light district were frightening.

The trio enjoyed the hospitality of the "Home Hostels," which at six dollars a day, provide the atmosphere and companionship of a "real home and real people." Thanks to the families of the hostels, the students saw Tennessee's Cumberland Lakes and the Shaker Village. They also got to swim in a guitar-shaped pool, but had to leave because of an "amorous couple!"

As senior John Freeman's guests in Memphis, they visited clubs, bars and concerts, and loved the Blues Singers on the streets, the countryside and the national parks. But, as Sebastien put it, "No museums - Yea!"

The group saw the bald eagles in Tennessee and the longest natural bridge east of

the Rockies--caused by rock erosion--on the way from Memphis to Birmingham.

Jan-Joost found a "real hideous cowboy hat" from Schwab's, which sells everything old and new. They all agree that Graceland, Elvis Presley's colonial home, is in very poor taste. "Rich and show-off," was how Francis described it.

They crossed the Mississippi, only to find themselves in the middle of nowhere. To make matters worse, the museum in Mud Island had already closed as well.

Life with Jay Thompson's family gave them "an inside view of American family life," Jan-Joost observed.

New Orleans, for Francis, was wonderful. "It is the only city where I've really felt at home. It was the first time

I've been able to walk in a city since I've been here." And walk he did, until he was bone tired. "It's touristic, but there is a strong atmosphere, something strong is going on in that city."

Jan-Joost appreciated the absence of malls and the presence of special shops with books and antiques. Sebastien mentioned the old houses painted in pastel shades of pink, purple, blue and yellow.

It was fun for Francis and Sebastien to converse in French with the locals, who pride themselves of their French origins. The two said, however, that the houses are positively Spanish, and the people say things like, "You are French? How inter-

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