

Forum gauges student social satisfaction

By ALLISON DOLPH,
Staff Writer

Seventeen people attended the Social Forum at the Union Outpost Wednesday evening. Moderated by sophomore Will Bradshaw, the forum was an opportunity for students to voice their opinions and suggestions about the state of social life at Davidson.

Bradshaw invited students to imagine that they had a "magic wand" with which they could change anything about Davidson's social life.

He, for example, would like to see a mammoth playground built right on campus so that students could revert back to childhood and relieve some stress.

The "magic wand" situation brought many other creative suggestions as well. A 24-hour restaurant like IHOP or the Waffle House right on campus, an alcohol free dance environment, or a Turkish bath or massage parlour were a few of the ideas mentioned.

A tad more realistically, discussion centered around Charlotte resources, the Rides program, coed living, alcohol and the Court, and social opportunities for minorities.

Some students felt that the college's selling point of a social life centered solely on campus was problematic.

Once at Davidson, students may rely too heavily on the Court or the Union and sink quickly into boredom rather than looking elsewhere for fun.

Possible remedies to this limitedness include the newly created Rides program and the idea of a centrally placed bulletin board publicizing community events.

Other students liked the idea of having a campus-based social life, with strong pressure for students to

provide socially for one another.

Optimism was expressed about next year's planned coed living, but some students also felt that coed living by room should be an option. Also pertaining to gender relations were suggestions that freshmen have same-sex mixers in addition to coed mixers. The possibility of increasing interaction between freshmen and upperclass people was also raised.

Alcohol and the Court were hot topics. Several students expressed concern over the unhealthy mentality equating drunkenness with fun.

One student's "magic wand" wish was to abolish the drinking age on campus so that if you're a student, you can drink. Complaints about the homogeneity of the Court were also voiced.

Unfortunately, alcohol policies may be restricting social functions. For example, that very afternoon, the Union had voted by a slim majority against holding its Spring Frolics function on the Court because of alcohol-related insurance implications (the event will be held on Richardson field instead). Allowing minors into 21-year-old night is also complicated because of the drinking issue.

In addition, students discussed the limitedness of social opportunities for minorities. Certain black students do not feel welcome on the "majority-centered" Court, which only seems to hire alternative bands. Pleas for a greater variety of music were registered by minorities as well as other students: Hip-Hop, Blues, Gospel, Rap, and even Taoist monk chants were some of the suggestions.

As new Union Board president Matthew Hobbie assessed the situation, "This is a small campus, and sometimes I think people act like it's a big one."

FLAG speaker Dean challenges D.C. law

'Come out, come out, come out'

By ANN CULP,
News Editor

Craig Dean, Executive Director of the Equal Marriage Rights Fund, spoke on Monday night about filing the first discrimination suit to legalize same-sex marriage in almost 30 years. Dean lives in Washington, D. C. area with his partner.

Dean is a graduate of Georgetown University Law School and has been published in numerous law journals and newspapers including the *New York Times*.

He has also appeared on several television talk shows, including "Oprah," "Phil Donahue," and "The Ricki Lake Show."

"We were one of the first male couples portrayed on television," says Dean of himself and his partner.

"We got thousands of letters from all over the world. A number of them were 'I am 15, 16, 18, I've seen you on TV, and I now have hope that I will have a long relationship one day,'" Dean says.

In a world where suicide is the second largest cause of teenage death and one-third of teenage suicides are due to sexual orientation dysfunction, Dean's affirming message plays a critical role.

Dean told his mother that "today African Americans ride in the front of buses and it's a non-issue. If we take this step out, then maybe 30 years from now, a mother doesn't have to be embarrassed if her son is gay."

"Harvey Milk in 1978 said, 'Come out and come to San Francisco, Come out and come to New York, Come out and come to a safe place.' Twenty years later, we say, 'Come out, Come out, Come out.'"

Dean originally applied for a marriage license in D.C., getting as far as a blood test before he was denied. He lost in a 2 to 1 decision from the Court of Appeals which said that "gay people can marry, they just have to marry people of the opposite sex," says Dean.

Although gay and lesbian couples often participate in a ceremonial union, it is not legally binding. Problems can arise when a gay or lesbian partner is injured or dies, with insurance plans, or even in rental agreements.

The issue of homosexual marriage rites is especially interesting



Craig Dean
Anna Fenton-Hathaway

when gay couples have children. There are currently 8-10 million children being raised in 3-4 million households with same-sex parents which means that 6.1% of American society is made up of gay/lesbian couples with children. If one partner with parental rights dies, the stepparent has no legal ties to the children.

"The lack of gay/lesbian couples to marry is a real threat to the American family," says Dean.

The Equal Marriage Rights Fund's message was Dean's message: "Immediate equality now and anything less is unacceptable."

Montoya wins Watson

By KIRSTEN RECKNAGEL,
Staff Writer

The stress of the job hunt disappeared instantly for Davidson senior Patrick Montoya last Tuesday when he was awarded a prestigious Watson Fellowship for international study. Montoya will spend his first post-Davidson year study-

ing Latin dance in Spain, Brazil, and Argentina, fully funded by the Watson Foundation.

"The Watson offers the chance of a lifetime to get away for a year," says Montoya.

A Political Science major with a concentration in Ethnic Studies, Montoya will leave for Spain in early August. During a six month stay, he plans to study the Flamenco. From Spain Montoya will travel to Brazil to study the Samba for another three months. The final leg of Montoya's 12 month adventure will be Argentina where he will study the Tango.

Montoya, whose father was Mexican and whose American mother taught dancing, says that to him "dance is an important social tool. It is my tool to get to know the society and culture of these countries."

In addition to social ramifications, Montoya says differences in style and tradition of dance even within Spain itself may be traced to political influences.

Thirty-two Davidson seniors submitted initial proposals to the College's Watson review committee. Four students, Randy Hartwell, Sally Permar, Nathan Summerlin and Montoya were sent on to the national selection round. Each was interviewed for ninety minutes by the Watson Foundation's Director during which time candidates were grilled on their ten-page proposals.

"It was the worst interview of my life. It was very difficult," says Montoya. "He had me up and dancing He made sure we earned it."



Pat Montoya

Trévor Thieme

Common Ground focuses on town-gown

By MARY CLARE JALONICK,
Editor Emerita

Last week President John Kuykendall, Davidson Mayor Russell Knox, Economics Professor David Martin and SGA town liaisons Julie Chevallier and Liz Boehmler spoke to the Davidson community organization Common Ground.

They discussed "The Past, Present, and Future of Relationships between the town of Davidson and Davidson College." Common Ground meets monthly to discuss important issues in the town of Davidson.

Kuykendall spoke about the evolution of the relationship as the college has increased in size and as Charlotte's northward expansion has made Davidson a more prominent suburb. He addressed long-term problems that this growth might engender.

Kuykendall discussed use of campus facilities by community members, which he said the college would be "increasingly reluc-

tant" to allow as both entities grow.

He also said that he hoped that the town of Davidson would avoid "Princetonization," a trend coined after Princeton, New Jersey became a posh suburb of New York and property values rose so high that Princeton faculty were not able to live around the university.

In addition to affordable housing, Kuykendall spoke of the continuing challenge of providing jobs for community members.

SGA town liaisons Julie Chevallier and Liz Boehmler spoke of the need to "build up trust between the College and the community."

They told the group about various service projects in which students have been involved and asked the members of the group to give them feedback on what community members think of the College.

"Some [students] don't give it a second thought," said Chevallier, "but most love the thought of living in a small town. We feel honored to be here."

Members of the audience ex-

pressed gratitude for student service and brought up the issue of parking. Ruth Pittard, Assistant Dean of Community Service, said that if students and community members could resolve the issue of parking on Main Street, most town-gown grievances would be solved.

Knox said the SGA-sponsored dinner held with the Davidson Board of Commissioners was one of the "most productive meetings we have ever had. We really learned how students think and what they want."

He spoke about improvements in relations in the last few years, especially among off-campus students and town police.

Moderator and town resident Martin opened discussion with a series of questions: What groups will be able to afford living in Davidson? How do students interact with the town in service, on Main Street, and in residential "student ghettos"? Is the parking problem solved? All of these questions were not answered by audience members, but others were brought up. Anthropology professor and

town resident Nancy Fairley brought up the issue of the ethnic composition of the town. She discussed the effects of rising taxes and the small number of African Americans employed on campus. "We risk losing that community," she said.

Kuykendall commented that in recruiting African Americans the college does not have "a very good record to date, and I don't know what the future looks like. It is an unannounced priority of the College, but it's had limited success." The group also discussed the lack of students shopping on Main Street, alcohol and drug problems on campus and in the town, and options for the town's teenagers on weekends. As the meeting ended, Martin asked the group if they had any other questions or comments. Blanche Porter, a resident of Davidson for 79 years, raised her hand.

"I just wanted to say that I love the students," she said. "I like the way they live up the town each fall."