

The Davidsonian

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DAVIDSON COLLEGE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2003

VOLUME 94, NUMBER 18

Civil rights legend tells students to 'make a little noise' in visit

By BRANDON CARROLL
News Editor

Civil Rights hero and Congressman John Lewis spent most of Monday at Davidson. Lewis, a Democrat who represents Atlanta from Georgia's 5th District, attended classes, toured campus, met with students at a cookie-and-coffee social, dined with President Bobby Vagt and capped off his visit with a rousing speech to listeners in the Sloan's Tyler-Tallman Hall.

Of Lewis's visit, Vagt said, "This is another example of how some of the most extraordinary things that happen on campus are the result of student initiative. I think it's grand." Vagt was alluding to the efforts of Adam Chalker '04, who was the driving force behind Lewis's visit. Chalker thanked Drs. Patrick Sellers, Mary Thornberry, Timothy Beach-Verhey, President Vagt and Administrative Assistant to the President Wendy Roberts for helping him make the visit possible.

The afternoon social brought more than 20 students together. After some polite introductions, students asked questions about the history of the Civil Rights movement, including inquiries into its non-violence philosophy and the prominent role of Southern black churches. Soon thereafter, discussion turned to the topic of war with Iraq, which Lewis opposes. The importance of student activism was discussed, and Lewis described how technology has changed the way people can protest since his days in the Civil Rights movement.

During his speech, Lewis passionately detailed his extensive involvement in the Civil Rights movement. He began by winning over the audience with amusing anecdotes from his childhood on a farm. At times the crowd seemed tense or in suspense, until Lewis would dryly let slip a joke. In other moments, his message seemed to raise everyone's eyes to meet his, and if the expression on people's faces were any indication, their spirits rose as well.

Recalling a childhood visit to Selma, Ala., during which Lewis observed "White Men" and "Colored Men" signs, he said, "As a young child I tasted the bitter fruits of segregation, and I didn't like it."

"Non-violence was not just a tactic... it is a way of life," Lewis went on to say. "Means and ends are inseparable. If you want to create the good society, the open society... if this is [to be] the ends, then love is the means."



photo by Matt Whited

Rep. John Lewis spent most of Monday visiting Davidson.

At the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Lewis said, "I got in trouble. It was good trouble. It was necessary trouble." That propensity to seek "necessary trouble" led Lewis to be one of the first 13 Freedom Riders.

Of the rides, Lewis said, "We changed public transportation. The only place our children will see those signs" of segregation is in museums and textbooks.

The congressman ended his speech with a vivid metaphor. Describing the "shotgun house" of his aunt, he recanted a memory from his childhood when a savage storm blew through and shook the unstable walls, threatening to lift the tin roof right off the home. When he, his siblings, and cousins were under that roof, Lewis's aunt would tell them to hold hands, and they did as they were told. Then, when a corner threatened to blow off, she would put them under it and they would hold on, until the same thing would happen on another corner. Together they held that roof on and weathered the storm, scared as they were.

Lewis then said, "Members of the Davidson College family, the wind may blow, the thunder may roll, the lightning may flash, and the rain may beat on that old house. Call it the house of Davidson College, call it the American House,

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Flowe, Ryburn top RLO's summer renovation list

By ROB HEIDRICK
Staff Writer

This summer, while students and faculty are at home recovering from a busy year, workers on campus will begin a series of projects to improve several buildings here at Davidson. The projects are the first step in a longer-range plan to gradually improve more campus structures, with a major focus on residence halls. Minor renovations are completed every summer, and, according to Director of Residence Life Leslie Marsicano, they are not always visible to the casual observer.

"Some are things that the students would notice, and some make their lives easier but they wouldn't necessarily notice them," says Marsicano, referring to replacements of water heaters, additions of smoke detectors and other practical dormitory maintenance that takes place annually.

This summer's schedule includes renovations of the Flowe and Ryburn senior apartments. Each apartment will have new carpeting and smoke detectors installed, and each will be repainted, among other repairs. Neither building has been renovated since they were first constructed in 1991.

Another summer focus will be the renovation of four Patterson Court houses, which will take place as part of the staggered schedule planned for all Court houses.

In addition to the senior apartment and Patterson Court repairs, the school is planning roof repair for several other buildings, as well as other routine maintenance to all residence halls. Marsicano refers to these changes as part of the "regular schedule of replacement", which includes placing 500 new mattresses in rooms and new furniture in lounges.

If these renovation plans seem less drastic than usual, they were intended to be.

"We're doing an easier schedule this summer to save up for plans we have for the next two summers," explains Marsicano.

Among these future plans are major changes for Belk, Akers and Irwin residence halls, which may include construction of kitchens, better bike storage, more study areas and exercise facilities. These plans are still being formulated, and RLO is currently seeking student input.

"Part of what we do with these [residence hall] renovations is get students involved. If anyone has any ideas for the renovations, they should consider being a part of the SGA Residence Life Committee," says Marsicano.

D-CAN organizes to fight autism

By MATT MACKENZIE
Staff Writer

Last Monday, D-CAN, the Davidson chapter of Cure Autism Now, held its inaugural meeting. Cure Autism Now is a national organization involved in raising funds for research into a cure for autism. At the meeting, student organizers emphasized that this is not only an opportunity to contribute to a good cause, but also a chance for students to get involved at the ground level of a new organization on campus.

To kick off the meeting, Nancy Popkin and her husband, biology professor Mark Stanback, spoke about their son Gray, who has autism. Popkin explained exactly what autism is and painted a vivid picture of life as a parent of an autistic child.

She spoke about finding out that Gray had autism, and how initially difficult their lives were after that. Popkin discussed how little direction she received about how to raise an autistic child. Since then, she has developed a

strict routine that often uses visual aids to help Gray function regularly, and she is active in raising awareness about autism in the area.

Gray's form of autism allows him to speak and communicate fairly well. However, as Popkin explained, autism is a spectrum disorder—that is, the symptoms vary from case to case. This means that many children have no power of speech, while others like Gray will lecture their parents endlessly about the latest topic, and still others, called savants and accounting for about 10 percent of autistic children, have an incredible skill in a particular area.

Popkin finished by reading a letter. She and Stanback had written it to their son Gray to tell him that he has autism, and what having autism means.

Basic symptoms of autism include unusual language, difficulty understanding social norms, heightened or dulled sensory response, need for routine, delayed motor skills, and a

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Nobel winner will speak on 'weird physics'

By JOE TAYLOR
Staff Writer

On March 12, physicist and Nobel Prize Laureate Eric Cornell will deliver a lecture entitled "Stone Cold Science: Bose-Einstein Condensation and the Weird World of Physics a Millionth of a Degree from Absolute Zero."

The event is sponsored by the Smith Lecture-ship, an endowment dedicated to attracting world renowned scientists to Davidson. Eric Cornell is one such scientist, for his list of accomplishments and accolades is unprecedented.

Dr. Elizabeth Mills, professor of English and chairperson of the Public Lectures Committee, is partially responsible for Cornell's visit to Davidson. Mills is confident that the physicist's message will intrigue students, administrators,

and faculty alike.

"This lecture is intended for an educated general public, not only for physics students."

Mills further comments on the purpose of such a presentation in the curriculum of non-physics majors. "I think that it is important that students at a liberal arts institution continue to listen and learn about areas which may not be their ultimate specialty."

Earlier this year, Cornell spoke at Reed College to a crowd of standing room only. "He's not just smart," said Mills, "he's articulate and entertaining."

Cornell received his B.S. in physics with honor and distinction from Stanford University in 1985. Upon graduation, Cornell received the Firestone Award for Excellence in Undergradu-

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