

# Student activists prepare for World AIDS Day

By JAMIE METRICK | STAFF WRITER

About 40 million people world-wide are living with HIV. In Guilford County alone 1,500 people are living with HIV, according to the Triad Health Project. Infection rates are increasing in every region of the world.

Because of these statistics, the Dec. 1 World AIDS Day was established to raise awareness and educate people about this preventable disease.

Celebrity-endorsed concerts, student-led demonstrations, and other charity events will take place around the world. Events are being launched on every level: continents, countries, states and communities. Guilford College will join in this global and local effort.

The Community AIDS Awareness Project (CAP) honored World AIDS Day the entire week leading up to Dec. 1. Their theme this year, "Open Your Eyes to AIDS," will culminate with their final demonstration today. Student volunteers will be led around campus blind-folded, escorted by partners all day.

At 6 p.m. in front of Founders Hall, the blindfolds will be ceremonially removed. Participants will read testimonies and names of people who have died from AIDS. The testimonies will be followed by a candle-light vigil.

"AIDS is a part of our world and we have a responsibility to educate ourselves about it," said CAP member and first-year Atreese Watkins.

Earlier this week CAP had a number of themed events taking place across campus. Monday's theme was "Personal." CAP volunteers and other students created a "Promise Chain." People demonstrated their personal commitment to AIDS awareness and prevention by stringing together red paper



JULIAN KENNEDY/GUILFORDIAN

MEMBERS OF CAP SORT CONDOMS AND MAKE RIBBONS IN PREPARATION FOR WORLD AIDS DAY.

links with the names of students who made them.

Tuesday's theme of "Community" was expressed through an open-mic night and bake sale at the student-run Greenleaf coffee house.

The open-mic gathered poets and musicians. Martha Assefa, a CAP member and sophomore from Kenya, read a monologue from a play about a formally uneducated Kenyan woman who wanted to be a poet.

"AIDS is just something that infuriates me," Assefa said. "I'm infuriated because I'm from Kenya where 700 people die a day (from AIDS) and medical companies don't

help their fellow people (get medicine). It's nice to see things like these photos and events that show people care and are trying to make a difference."

On Wednesday, CAP held a pajama-party style viewing of the movie *Rent* in the Queer and Allied Resource Center (QuARC). Food and discussion of the effect of AIDS in the country tied to the day's theme, "United States."

"International" was Thursday's theme, which was observed with the viewing of the movie *Yesterday*, the story of an African woman living with HIV who struggles to live long enough to send her only daughter

to school.

In between these events CAP members and volunteers distributed condoms, sold CAP logo beanie hats for charity, and gave out red ribbons. On Monday, many students opened their campus mailboxes to find a ribbon and a schedule of events. Only half received a ribbon, representing the fraction of college-aged students who have HIV/AIDS.

The symbolic red ribbons were created in 1991 by the New York based Visual AIDS organization. The ribbon is worn as a sign of solidarity for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Lastly, CAP presented the "Open Your Eyes to AIDS" photograph display in front of Founders. On Tuesday morning bushes leading to the main door and tree trunks around campus were strewn with over 118 photographs of Guilford students, hands palm-up covering their eyes.

"I think it's important that students know what's going on," said first-year Martha Orhai, CAP member.

"Our age group is at the highest risk, but we've grown up with this idea that we're at the least risk because we know what an STD is. (AIDS) doesn't need to be another fact of life."

After the campus-wide observance, CAP co-founder Erin Burns, a senior, left today for Washington, D.C., to participate in the World AIDS Day march. Also in D.C. will be numerous other demonstrations and a display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt. The Quilt, now with 40,000 panels, was created in 1987 as a memorial to those who died from AIDS.

While not everyone can go to Washington, Burns urges students to get involved with World AIDS Day and other CAP activities:

"Find out how we can change the current statistics in our own lives and what our government is doing," Burns said.

## Political cartoonist talks Quakerism and journalism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

being a notable exception. Wilkinson, though she is religious, is against limiting freedom of speech.

"Today everyone wants to 'stop them damn pictures,' if they hurt their feelings or the feelings of anyone else in their tribe," she said. "When newcomers arrive on our shores with their dearly held religious beliefs, they should come expecting those beliefs to be scrutinized."

Wilkinson went on to point out that people who say that it is offensive to show pictures of their religious figures never complain when they are shown in a positive light.

"People hate stereotyping unless it's positive stereotyping," she said. Faculty, staff, students and friends of the college attended the events.

"I think she had a very level-headed view of religion, most likely attributed to the fact that she is a satirist," said sophomore Ross Brubeck, who attended both events. "But she doesn't let too much get in the way of what she has to say."

Later, Wilkinson gave a lecture entitled "Drawn to Quakerism:

**"People hate stereotyping unless it's positive stereotyping."**

Signe Wilkinson  
Political Cartoonist

Friendly Influence on the Artist's Craft" at New Garden Friends meeting.

"A girl growing up Quaker has the feeling of equality in her bones," she said, explaining how she has come so far in a field that is dominated by men.

Wilkinson described journalism

as an extremely compelling field but also an extremely cynical one.

"Quaker meeting is a good antidote to journalism for me," she said. I really try not to think about cartoons during meeting for worship

Wilkinson showed slides of her cartoons to the audience, joking that since being cheap was one of the cardinal virtues of Quakerism, they had probably all come to see free cartoons anyway.

"When they say practicing Quakers, they are talking about me," Wilkinson said. "I

could use a lot of practice. I know a lot of religious people who need practice following the tenets of their beliefs, Max Carter being the obvious exception."

"Coming from a liberal, un-programmed Quaker background, I saw expressions of community, integrity, peace, equality and poten-



JULIAN KENNEDY/GUILFORDIAN

QUAKER CARTOONIST SIGNE WILKINSON SITS ON A CENSORSHIP PANEL DISCUSSION IN THE LIBRARY.

tially simplicity in her cartoons," said junior and practicing Quaker Colin Bussier-Nichols. "But it should be recognized that her understanding of these testimonies would not have been congruent with the beliefs of more than half the Quakers in the U.S."

Junior Rania Campbell-Cobb, a

practicing Quaker, was enthusiastic about the lecture:

"She's a woman who is very prominent in a male-dominated field. Her Quaker upbringing said that she could do whatever men could and so she has a belief that she belongs. I think that is really great."