



LET THEIR LIGHTS SHINE — Members of the Campus Activities Board set out luminaires on the afternoon of Dec. 8 as part of Wesleyan's Christmas Celebration. Among those helping with the project were (from left) Jennifer Littlejohn and Heather Diez. (Photo by Beth Sherrard.)

Wesleyan schedules programs as part of National AIDS Week

In conjunction with National AIDS Week, North Carolina Wesleyan College held a variety of educational programs last week to inform and warn about the AIDS virus.

Keynote speaker for the week was Bill Brantley, member of the board of directors of Rocky Mount's CARA (Care and Response to AIDS). Brantley, former editor and publisher of the *Saturday Evening Post*, has also been diagnosed HIV-positive.

"One out of every 100 people has AIDS in this country," he said on Dec. 7, which amounts to about 2.2 million infected with the disease, the greatest health challenge this world has ever known. In June, the National AIDS Commission reported that the United States has the largest number of people infected with HIV in the world. yet, Brantley said, they have no plan to deal with it.

This fatal epidemic will claim the lives of more people than the major plagues in history. By the year 2000, Brantley warned, it is

predicted that 40 million people worldwide will die of AIDS. This, he said, is going to change the entire structure of society, just as the plagues did.

At least 70-80 percent of the people in all the gay bars Brantley has visited are HIV-positive. He said he can tell by looking at them that they have the disease, yet many have not been tested.

Among the routine problems those infected with the virus face are insurance, transportation, food, housing, and employment. Transportation becomes a problem, Brantley said, because not many local doctors want or have the resources to treat this disease.

"But there are a few," he said, "and I'm thankful they are here."

Other complex problems that loom over these dying people are spiritual issues. The United States has taken the stance that AIDS is a behavioral problem that will take care of itself, Brantley said, and churches are running hard against the disease. Everything is preaching a wrathful God, he continued, but no one is taught about Jesus, who never turned his back on anyone.

Brantley said the most important stance to take is to be a Samaritan. "How would you want or deserve to be treated? I'm Baptist enough to say, 'Go thou and do likewise,'" he said.

"HIV is a disease," he stressed,

"and the only moral issue surrounding it is the response to those who are sick and dying. These people need help, not condemnation."

Brantley said that those with AIDS are pushing for a comprehensive national health plan to be assured of funds for the costly drugs HIV-positives need. As with any expensive health complication, insurance proves to be a problem, from epilepsy to multiple sclerosis.

Because he has availed himself to the testing of many drugs as a human guinea pig, Brantley said he has lengthened his life and plans to live at least six more years. But, he warned, anyone who has been sexually active in the last six months is at risk and should be tested.

Tests taken three to six months after having sex or using drugs prove positively whether a person has AIDS, even though symptoms may not come about for 10-15 years later. Ultimately, everyone needs to be tested, he said.

Brantley gave several suggestions of ways in which people can help those who have AIDS, including:

- Don't discriminate against those with AIDS — it's illegal.
- Continue to educate the community on how the disease is spread. Make people stop irrationally fearing those infected. Warn of the dangers of sex and drugs.

Panel looks at homelessness

By KIMBERLY CURSEEN

Society is plagued with many social ills such as drugs, crime, the threat of disease — and the homeless. In a country of plenty and abundance, there are five million known homeless people who inhabit this nation. In fact, most Americans are just three paychecks away from being homeless.

North Carolina Wesleyan College, in a series of public forums held in the Student Activities Center, addressed the problem of the Homeless recently. Despite poor attendance by faculty and staff, the forum was considered by those who attended an enlightening and informative half hour.

In attendance were two staff members, Housing Director Cheryl McKenzie and South Hall Resident Director Mike Sanseviro, who organized this particular forum. Also two Wesleyan students, Brad Barnes and Lionel Moad, attended.

The panel of four held a question-and-answer and a discussion session on the problems of the homeless, causes of the problems,

and how students can personally help make a difference. Sanseviro brought to the forum statistics from *Newsweek* magazine on the homeless.

According to *Newsweek's* figures, during 1992 five percent of the homeless are elderly, one-third are mentally ill, and three-fourths are alcoholics or drug users. Also, teenagers are the fastest growing group among the homeless. One out of every three homeless individuals are teenagers. Sanseviro said that AIDS among the homeless population is growing.

McKenzie volunteers her time at the Rocky Mount homeless shelter, the Soup Kitchen. She was very vocal throughout the meeting, giving details of her volunteer experience and her opinion as to some of the causes of the homeless problem. She said that the homeless do not always have access to the various kinds of necessary assistance.

"They can't receive welfare unless they have a permanent address," she said. "They get caught up in the bureaucratic system."

Sanseviro suggested that what

some states have already done is to make post office boxes count as addresses.

McKenzie also stressed how important student contributions are. She said some homeless shelters are held together by "bandaids." She also said that at the Soup Kitchen where she volunteers, people only receive one hot meal a week, on Thursdays. She said the shelter is at the mercy of the kindness of the community.

Lionel Moad pointed out that "some want to be homeless." Some individuals choose that life for one reason or another. Sometimes people feel the world is hard to deal with or they find out they are better off homeless than before. A world that forces people to do that is a tragedy, he said.

Moad was very involved in the food drive sponsored and headed by the C.A.B. He said that all contributions are welcome and much needed. Brad Barnes said that he plans personally to attend a homeless shelter for the experience. He also supports the campus-wide food and clothing drive for the homeless.

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To everyone: Good luck on finals and have a happy holiday!

Congratulations, Doctor Christensen!!!

Troy: Good luck with your seminar presentation! And

congrats on finally getting outta here!

Pam — Nice hair!

T.A. — I hear *Rolling Stone* classifieds has some nice holiday specials!!

Save the non-tenured faculty!!!

NCWC — Where the remedial student comes first.

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds. — Albert Einstein.