

Top priority

Venereal disease research loses funds to AIDS studies

By SHARON KEBSCHULL
Staff Writer

Despite increases in other sexually transmitted diseases, fear of an AIDS epidemic has prompted a redirection of funds away from the more common STDs and into the pockets of AIDS researchers.

In the first eight months of 1987, the number of syphilis cases reported in North Carolina increased 18 percent over the same time period last year to 854 cases, said Jim Fowler, branch director of the state's STD Control Division.

Nationwide, that figure increased 29 percent, said Ward Cates, director of the STD Division of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

"I'm sure as people take heed to the messages being given to AIDS patients about protecting themselves, that will have an effect overall," Fowler said. "What works for the prevention of AIDS also works for (other) STDs."

Among gay communities, the instance of STDs has gone way down, as people become increasingly aware of the need for "safe sex," said Wendy Wertheimer, director of public policy

for the American Social Health Association. But the same precautions are not being taken in the heterosexual community, she said.

In California and New York City, the increase in cases of syphilis has gone up 50 percent in the first three months of this year, Wertheimer said. The rise has been noted mostly among heterosexuals, she said.

The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta appropriates the funds granted it by Congress to its own departments and to state departments. But the CDC has admitted redirecting STD funds to AIDS funds in the last five years, Wertheimer said. The CDC has also redirected 45 full-time epidemiological staff members to AIDS study. While this is understandable in the outbreak of the AIDS crisis, she said, the funds and staff have not been replaced.

"One of the real problems is that training has been a real problem in STDs," she said. "Those who are trained are called into 'emergency duty' for AIDS."

Fowler also said manpower to do follow-ups on cases, an important aspect to control the diseases, is

lacking at the state level.

"There are not enough resources to apply proven techniques (of prevention)," said Cates, adding that money was replaced in 1986 and 1987, but it will take time to replace the staff positions with trained professionals.

While the rates of gonorrhea have gone down 14 percent over the first eight months of this year in North Carolina, the cases nationwide have increased over the last two years, Wertheimer said. The most alarming part of this is the rise in cases of antibiotic-resistant strains of gonorrhea, she said.

Cases of resistant strains experienced a 90 percent increase last year and Wertheimer expects a similar increase this year.

There has been a 30-fold increase since 1980 in these types of gonorrhea, Wertheimer said.

Other types of STDs are being virtually ignored, both in research and protective services, because the funds simply don't stretch that far, Wertheimer said.

Chlamydia, an STD found equally in men and women, is increasing by

four million cases a year, she said. The long-term consequences of this disease are not known for men, but it can lead to pregnancy problems and sterility in women.

Experts are also concerned about the recent scientific evidence that places people with STDs in a high risk category for contracting AIDS. While it is not known exactly why, diseases such as syphilis and herpes seem to be "co-factors" in the development of AIDS, Wertheimer said. One reason for this may be that the lesions present in these STD patients allow the AIDS virus an opening into the bloodstream. Another theory is that STD patients' immune systems are weakened by the ongoing fight with the disease.

"If the rates of STDs increase, are we in the long run making the problem much more serious? Are we now putting many more people at risk?" Wertheimer said.

Cates said the CDC will continue its limited intervention programs and release guidelines to work on controlling STDs, especially the resistant strains of gonorrhea.

White Patriot leader to testify against former party members

From Associated Press reports

RALEIGH — Former White Patriot Party leader Glenn Miller pleaded guilty Monday to two federal charges, including mailing a "declaration of war," and agreed to testify against other members of his defunct organization, authorities said.

A charge of mailing a threatening communication was brought against Miller in North Carolina, and a charge of possessing automatic weapons is expected to be filed within a week in Missouri, Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug McCullough said.

McCullough said Miller, 46, had agreed to cooperate with the government and testify against other members of his organization and about other criminal activities of which he may be aware.

The plea agreement recommends a five-year sentence, McCullough said.

The maximum penalty on the mail charge was five years and a \$250,000 fine.

Dole to campaign for husband

WASHINGTON — Elizabeth Dole announced Monday she is resigning as transportation secretary and plans to "do everything I can" to help her husband, Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., win the presidency next year.

After meeting with President Reagan for nearly 15 minutes, Dole told reporters she will leave the Cabinet Oct. 1 and begin full-time campaigning for her husband with a 12-state swing through the South.

An early name to surface as a possible successor to the position was Patricia Goldman, a moderate Republican who is vice chairman of the National Transportation

News in Brief

Safety Board

James Burnley, the department's deputy secretary, is expected to take over as acting secretary, but sources said he is unlikely to remain permanently and reportedly already has discussed taking a job outside government.

Arms agreement still undecided

WASHINGTON — President Reagan said Monday the superpowers still face "difficult issues" before reaching an arms agreement, and the White House cautioned it was unlikely a missile accord or summit date would result from talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze this week.

On the eve of Shevardnadze's visit to the White House, Reagan instructed U.S. negotiators to present a new draft treaty on intermediate range forces. It calls for elimination of all medium-range nuclear missiles, with a range of about 600 to 3,000 miles, within three years and abolishing shorter-range missiles, with a range of about 300 to 600 miles, within one year.

Iraq urges punishment of Iran

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Monday it was Iraq's turn to demand that the United Nations punish Iran, its foe in the Persian Gulf war.

Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz urged U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar to take "punitive measures" against Iran for failing to respond to a Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire in their 7-year-old war.

Robertson wins informal GOP poll in Iowa

By MICHAEL JORDAN
Staff Writer

The Rev. Pat Robertson garnered a full third of the vote, outperforming party heavyweights in a straw poll conducted by the Republican Party of Iowa Saturday.

About 4,200 voters in Ames, Iowa heard 15-minute speeches by each Republican candidate present: Vice President George Bush, Kansas Sen. Bob Dole, New York Rep. Jack Kemp, Robertson, former Delaware Gov. Pierre du Pont, California economist Ben Hernandez and Mississippi businesswoman Kate Heslop.

After the speeches, the listeners were polled, said Christy Cobb, director of communications for the Republican Party of Iowa.

Robertson received about 34 percent of the vote. Dole took second place with about one quarter of the vote and Bush managed third with just over 22 percent, Cobb said.

Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who did not attend, and little-knowns Fernandez and Heslop each won less than 1 percent of the vote, Cobb said.

The Iowa GOP held the "Caval-

cade of Stars" candidate speeches and poll as a fund-raiser, charging \$25 per ticket, Cobb said. Although more than 4,700 people bought tickets and attended the event, only 4,200 voted.

Robertson's victory demonstrated his growing credibility as a presidential candidate, said Scott Hatch, Robertson's regional press secretary.

"It's another indication of Pat's strength, especially in dealing with the vice president," Hatch said. "That makes four times we've gone head-to-head with him and four times we've won."

Hatch said Robertson previously outscored Bush in Michigan, Florida and South Carolina Republican Party polls.

"We think it shows a tremendous weakness on the vice president's part," Hatch said.

Mary Burnette, Kemp's director of communications, said the Iowa poll was not a fair indicator of public opinion.

Several campaigns purchased large numbers of tickets and distributed

them to their supporters, manipulating the outcome, she said.

Although Thad Beyle, professor of political science at UNC, agreed that the poll was not an accurate indication of the candidates' status, he said Robertson's victory still "shook some people up."

Hatch said the recent scandal involving the PTL ministries may have led some people to question Robertson's candidacy, but the scandal did not seriously damage the campaign.

"It certainly didn't seem to hurt him in Iowa Saturday," Beyle said.

Robertson has not officially entered the Republican nomination race but probably will in the next few weeks, Hatch said.

Last year, Robertson said he would enter the race only if he received three million endorsements by this Thursday.

Robertson has just under three million endorsements and will probably have enough by Thursday, Hatch said.

For the Record

Monday's article, "GOP candidates discuss 'tuition voucher' option," incorrectly stated that Rep. Jack Kemp, R-N.Y., supported tuition vouchers. Kemp supports tuition tax credits.

Also, "Democrats favor higher teacher pay," incorrectly stated that

the National Education Association supports merit pay for teachers. The NEA supports across-the-board increases in teacher pay and opposes merit-based pay.

The Daily Tar Heel regrets the reporting errors.

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