

Lower AZT cost prompts concern

By ALAN MARTIN
Staff Writer

The cost of the AIDS fighting drug AZT has been reduced 20 percent, according to an announcement Monday by the drug's maker, but some people in the AIDS community question the company's motives.

Burroughs Wellcome Co., the producer of the drug, wanted to lower the price for economic reasons and to make the product more accessible to AIDS patients, Kathy Bartlett at Burroughs Wellcome said.

The pharmaceutical company can lower the price it charges to retailers because it expects the population of AZT users to increase.

Clinical studies have shown AZT helps prevent AIDS symptoms from appearing in people who have been exposed to the HIV virus, Bartlett said.

Since consumption of the drug is going to grow, Burroughs Wellcome can make a smaller profit on each capsule and still recover costs of production, she said.

"Any reduction in price is good news," David Jones of the N.C. AIDS Service Coalition said.

But Jones said the reduction should be put in perspective. The market for AZT is going to increase 1,400 percent, from 40,000 to 600,000 patients

on the drug, he said. A price reduction of 20 percent pales in comparison to a 1,400 percent increase in sales.

Even with this reduction, many people cannot afford the drug — which remains the single most expensive drug treatment in the history of modern medicine.

"The reduction is not a grand, magnanimous gesture," Jones said.

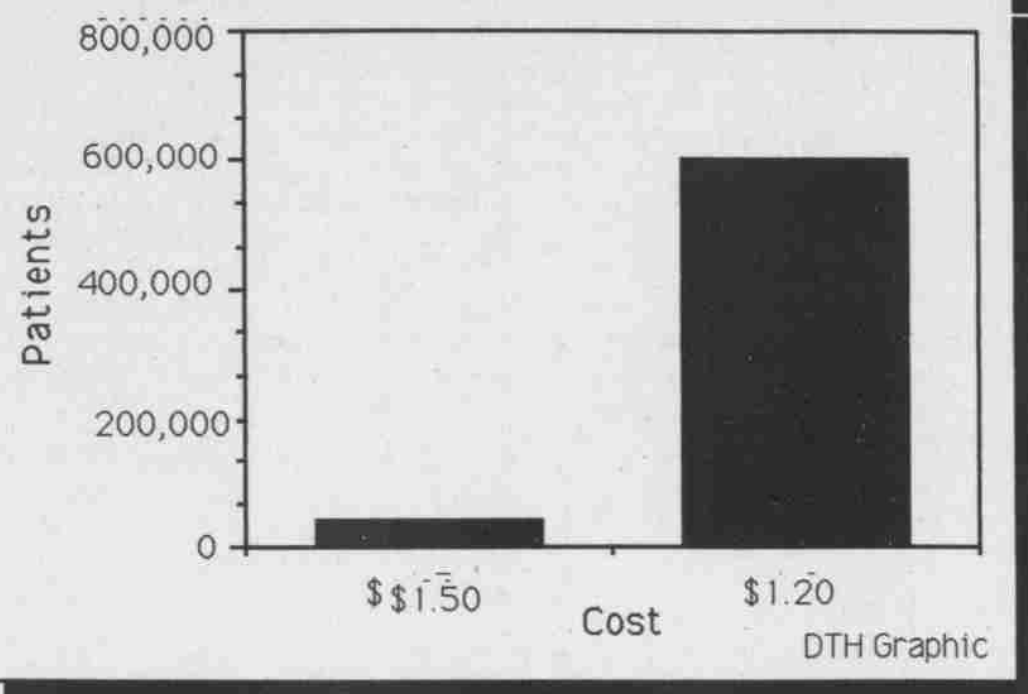
He said rumors in Washington that the federal government might suspend the patent on AZT may have prompted the action. The government can set aside a drug patent if it can contract cheaper production and if suspension would be in the national interest, Jones said.

Bartlett said Burroughs Wellcome had no indication that such action was being considered. She also said there was no basis for such government action in this case.

The Gay Men's Health Crisis Center in New York does not feel the reduction is enough, according to spokeswoman Carisa Cunningham. The fact that the price was reduced 20 percent indicates the company was overcharging at least 20 percent and could possibly still be overcharging, she said.

The motives of Burroughs

Revenue changes after AZT cost reduction



Wellcome were also questioned by Kathy Martin, head nurse in infectious diseases at Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. She said she was relieved the price was down and concerned the price could still be lower.

People are starting the drug earlier and living longer, she said.

Some people in the AIDS community are pleased with the announcement, Lori Cardona at the Metroline AIDS Project in Charlotte said. Many people are prescribed reduced doses now, and this, along with the reduced price, will save many patients up to \$6,000 per year, she said.

Bill proposes 4-year science scholarship

By SANDY WALL
Staff Writer

Prospective college students interested in studying mathematics, science or engineering would be eligible to receive a four-year, \$20,000 scholarship under a bill recently passed in the U.S. House.

The bill, which was co-sponsored by Rep. David Price, D-N.C., and Rep. Tim Valentine, D-N.C., calls for one man and one woman from each Congressional district to receive the scholarship for the study of science at the college level.

The bill, which had 86 co-sponsors, was passed Sept. 12 on a voice vote by the House and referred Sept. 13 to the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

The scholarship is in response to the declining number of students who are choosing to study science in college, Rachel Perry, press secretary for Price, said.

"It is designed to encourage high school students to study math and science," she said Tuesday in a telephone interview. "It takes steps to improve the quality of science education."

Only 14 percent of all college students were studying science in 1987, compared with 21 percent of college

students in 1966, Perry said. The scholarship program is designed to help reverse those numbers, she said.

If the program becomes law, the scholarships would be created, awarded and administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Washington, Perry said.

"Basically the bill does create a new math and science program," she said. "It is an annual, merit-based competition."

A spokeswoman for the NSF said the bill was a good idea and would help shift the academic emphasis back to science.

"The U.S. has fallen behind its counterparts — Germany and Japan — in scientists and engineers," Shirley Day, a legislative specialist at the NSF, said.

But Day expressed concern that the NSF is undermanned and would need additional staffing and money to set up and run a new scholarship program.

"The idea is good," she said, "but I'm not sure the NSF can handle it. NSF would have the responsibility of administering it."

The bill was originally introduced in the House in February by Rep. Doug Walgren, D-Pa., with Price as one of the co-sponsors.

Girl Scout cookies provide unique way to relieve exam stress

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Rochester Institute of Technology has found a way to ease the tensions during final exams of the fall quarter.

Last November the school invited the local Girl Scouts to hold a two-day cookie sale in the student union, Debbie Walzer, coordinator of campus information and reservations, said.

This year's sale will run from Nov. 6-8, Walzer said.

"Based on last year, since we sold out in two days, I expect we will do really well," Walzer said. "I felt that our students would benefit from it."

Across the Campuses

Students really like the cookies, which sell for \$2 a box, she said. Many of the students enjoy remembering their childhood and talking with the Girl Scouts.

Tackling the real world
ST. LOUIS, Mo. — First-year MBA students at Washington University's

John M. Olin School of Business are learning some very realistic lessons of the business world.

The students are sent through a program called TYCOON, a computer-simulated game that offers experience in meeting the challenges of "every aspect of running a large multinational corporation," Lyn Pankoff, associate dean of computing, said in the National On-Campus Report.

Thieves can be stopped
CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Much campus crime is preventable, Univer-

sity of Tennessee-Chattanooga's director of law enforcement said in the National On-Campus Report.

The school has just published its crime statistics for the past three years. The report is in compliance with a new state law requiring such figures.

According to the report, about 80 percent of UTC crimes involve thefts.

Rescuers provide great service
WINOOSKI, Vt. — This year is the 20th anniversary of the fire and rescue service at St. Michael's College in Vermont.

The service is run by student volunteers and is equipped with three fire trucks and two ambulances.

Donald Sutton, who still runs the college's safety and security office, started the service.

The rescue service provides a great opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and the community, Sutton said in the National On-Campus Report.

Last year the service answered more than 1,600 fire and ambulance calls.

Fund for former addicts set up

SARASOTA, Fla. — Recovering alcoholics and addicts may be able to get aid from a special scholarship fund at the University of South Florida-Sarasota.

The fund, sponsored by a recovering alcoholic, has already granted awards up to \$1,000 to five students, according to National On-Campus Report. Students must maintain high academic standards and not have used drugs or alcohol in the past two years.

The students must also be active in a drug or alcohol recovery program.

— compiled by Kari Barlow

Committee suggests improvements for community colleges

By WENDY BOUNDS
Staff Writer

The N.C. Community College system can expect change and improvement, according to a report released from a panel of state community college leaders.

Sherwood Smith, a Carolina Power and Light Company official, recently met with a 22-member committee to make recommendations for improvements in the state's community college

system. This "Committee of the Future" released a report comprised of 33 proposals, which were then turned over to the State Department of Community Colleges.

The proposals will be considered with the purpose of emphasizing quality in the local community college systems, Edward Wilson, executive vice president of the Community College Department, said.

"We want to take a hard look at what

we will be doing for the next 25 years in our community colleges," he said.

One of the recommendations called for a management audit to be made by the Office of State Budget and Management. The audit, led by Allen Barwick, budget administrator, asked for reorganization of the state Community College Department administration.

The audit calls for a cut of 49 jobs in the department. But according to Barwick, there are seven new positions to

be filled, and approximately 12 of the jobs will be relocated on college campuses.

"The new 'RIF,' reduction in force, will cut down on intermediate positions and eliminate unnecessary functions," Barwick said.

Wilson said the purpose of the proposal was not an effort to reduce the number of workers in the department, but simply a call for better organization and most effective use of positions.

"Our original intent wasn't to cut 42 jobs," he said. "Forty-two isn't a magical number. We simply want to position our agency to more effectively

respond to educational needs in the community college system."

Other recommendations propose increased aid to student support systems within the colleges. These support systems offer job placement services and other activities geared toward helping students in community colleges.

The committee also called for changes in criminal justice policies and fire-fighting certification, allowing both to be handled on the grass-roots level at each campus.

In a telephone interview, Bruce Howell, president of Wake Technical Community College, said he and his

staff were planning to read the audit report thoroughly in the next day or two, and they will then decide how they will work on the proposals with the Community College Department.

Wilson, who will have more influence in the day-to-day operations of the community college system after the proposed changes are implemented, said the changes would increase efficiency within the department.

"We are very pleased with the study made by the state budget administration," he said. "They made some outstanding recommendations, and we intend to make use of many of them."

Forum to address ethics code issue

By CHRISTINE THOMAS
Staff Writer

With the Nov. 7 local elections approaching, the Chapel Hill-Carrboro League of Women Voters is sponsoring a forum Thursday on ethics in local government.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church, and it will include panel discussions with elected officials from Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Orange County.

Orange County Board of Commissioners Chairman Moses Carey, Chapel Hill Town Council member Joe Herzenberg and Carrboro Alderman Jay Bryan will be the featured speakers at the forum, which will include discussion and reaction to the need for a strong government ethics code.

"The focus of the league in conducting the ethics code study deals with council members making sound decisions, especially regarding land use and developmental issues," Roberta Black, a member of the League of Women

Voters, said.

The adoption of a stronger code would prevent a conflict of interest by elected officials. An ethics code also would involve full disclosure of campaign contributions and business and private holdings.

The purpose of the discussion is to shed light on the need for ethics in government.

A league report said, "It is the premise of this study that as long as we rely on part-time citizen government, even conscientious officials may need help to avoid conflicts between their public and private interests."

"It is not a disgrace to have a potential conflict of interest — it is only dishonorable to fail to recognize a real or apparent conflict so that action damaging to the public's trust in government can be avoided."

The league sponsored a survey on presenting the idea of an ethics code to local government bodies. The group does not feel that there is any doubt

about the ethics of existing governing boards, but problems could arise in the future, Black said.

"We (the league) like to be ahead of an issue."

"Some of the town council members are eager to have an ethics code," Black said, but there are those officials who feel attacked by proposals for a code.

Herzenberg said that an ethics code is unnecessary and that Chapel Hill has part of an ethics code in place.

"It (an ethics code) is about public and private morality," Herzenberg said. "I don't think the officials in Orange County are particularly unethical."

The existing Ethics Code of Orange County, as stated in the league's report, includes only provisions relating to conflict of interest and full disclosure.

Black said an ethics code would only affect the students who voted in Orange County elections, and students will not relate to this issue in any way other than they would in other towns.

Development to start construction

By JEFF MOYER
Staff Writer

An old idea is gaining new support in efforts to revitalize downtown Chapel Hill.

The Fountains, a development combining commercial and residential space, is set to begin construction in early October with completion expected in about a year.

"This is both a new concept and an old concept for Chapel Hill," Eunice Brock, real estate agent for the developmental operations, said.

Many years ago, families owned a business on the bottom floor of a building and lived in the floors above the store, she said.

"Our goal is to keep the downtown interesting and viable," Brock said. Most cities have downtown office buildings that become deserted at the end of the day. With the presence of a development such as Fountains, the downtown will become more lively in the evening.

"Fifteen or 20 years ago, a great deal of businesses in the area housed students in the upper floors of their buildings," Chapel Hill Town Council member Joe Herzenberg said. Fountains is a rebirth of this old idea.

Some businesses in towns the size of Chapel Hill have moved to malls or office buildings removed from the city, Brock said. This plan will make it more appealing to certain businesses to stay in the downtown area by providing a different approach than more conventional operations.

As opposed to many other downtown development projects, the Fountains plan didn't create any controversy among the town council.

"The reason there was no controversy among the council was because it's a good idea," Herzenberg said. "The project is of such a modest scale that it does not threaten the residential neighborhoods to the north of the site."

Non-residential use of the property concerns the town council, Herzenberg

said. "The Fountains establishes a medium between the residential area and the commercial area of Chapel Hill."

"People felt that the development was extremely well suited to council plans in the area in terms of traffic and parking," said council member Nancy Preston. "It's a unique situation because of the mixed use of the building and the presence of underground parking spaces."

The development's impact on the students of the University should be minimal because of the nature of the complex, Brock said. There are no plans to include retail stores in the complex.

"The office space sold thus far has been to a variety of professionals including an architect, a psychotherapist, a securities analyst and a computer firm," she said.

Located between Colonel Chutney's and Western Sizzlin at 308-310 W. Rosemary St., the complex will combine office space on the first two floors of the building with 12 condominiums on the third and fourth floors, Brock said.

The prices of the condominium units range from \$125,000 for the third level apartments to \$175,000 for the four penthouses on the top floor. Interest in the project resulted in sales of 55 percent of the building before construction had started, she said.

West End Partners Limited Partnership, the Fountains development group, plans to build a similar complex next to Fountains after the original has been sold. The second will likely be more residential than the first, depending on the market, Brock said.

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