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AIDS is a virus that strikes the immune system. The deadly disease is spread most often through sexual contact and through the sharing of contaminated hypodermic needles or syringes by drug abusers.

Watching someone die of AIDS is "one of the most helpless feelings in the world," said Scott Seibert, Mid-VAC chairman and a counselor for the terminally ill.

But Seibert, who has worked with four of the seven AIDS patients in Lane County who have died, said he also has seen some of the most inspiring things he's ever experienced while working with AIDS patients.

"Every day means something to them," he said. "They say, 'Isn't this a refreshing little rain we're having?' and I'm thinking, 'It's cold, and it's wet, and I forgot my umbrella.'"

Seibert also has watched AIDS patients fight discrimination and rejection as they struggle with the degenerative disease. "It's obscene to me that that would be a time your family would run from you. You can't make up for that slur."

Mid-VAC provides a range of services to those with the AIDS virus, including anonymous AIDS testing, counseling for those who test positive for the AIDS virus and clothing exchanges to provide clothes for people who have lost weight because of the disease.

Shanti in Oregon, an AIDS support group based in Eugene, also provides emotional support to people with AIDS and to their families and friends.

The Rev. Ken Storer, executive director of the group, became involved with Shanti in San Francisco, where the group originally was founded in the

late 1970s.

"Just too many of my friends had died of AIDS, and I wanted to do something," he said.

While attending Gay Pride Week in San Francisco, Storer saw a booth staffed by Shanti volunteers. He had just lost a close friend to AIDS and broke down when he started talking to one of the volunteers "because I had never dealt with his death."

Storer established Shanti, which means inner peace in Sanskrit, in Oregon in 1985 and has seen a steady increase in the number of clients since then.

About two dozen volunteers donate six to eight hours each per week and are matched one-on-one with an AIDS patient. "We ask the volunteers to get involved to the point where it can hurt," Storer said.

Shanti also has a support group for anyone close to the person dying of AIDS. "The biological family has to deal with finding out about AIDS and then finding out that the person is gay all at once. The person is facing death, and so are the people close to them."



Scott Seibert

Storer admits that it is sometimes disheartening to work with a disease that is 100 percent fatal. But he adds quickly that giving some comfort to those with the disease makes the effort worthwhile.

"I want my brothers and sisters to be cared for with dignity. We can't change the outcome of the disease... but we can make a difference."

Volunteers, counselors needed

The Mid-Valley Action Committee, a local AIDS awareness group, is looking for counselors for their private anonymous AIDS testing program. The program starts Feb. 3. All people interested in serving as pre- or post-test counselors are required to take a short training session. For more information, call 667-9226.

Shanti in Oregon, an AIDS support group, also is looking for volunteers to work with AIDS patients. Call 342-5088 for more information.

Mid-VAC also has a support group for those who test positive for the AIDS virus. The group meets weekly at a private residence. For more information, call Ken at 344-5367.

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"early" semester system, which the staff is now recommending for the entire state.

The early semester calendar typically has two 15-week regular terms followed by a summer session. The first semester begins about Labor Day (fall quarter usually begins three weeks later), and the second semester ends about the middle of May.

Olum said he supports the semester system for "purely academic reasons. It takes more time to explore a subject in depth."

"In the semester system, things can go wrong... such as an illness... and you have time to adjust," Olum said.

The staff says faculty members and students are divided on the issue, but in discussions with the President's Council, the Academic Council, and community college presidents, "there is relatively little opposition to the early semester calendar; most of the concerns center on problems of conversion."

The staff has recommended that the major responsibility for the conversion to an early semester calendar should be delegated to each campus.

Each campus should establish a Campus Conversion Committee, the chairperson of which should be a member of an Interinstitutional Committee on Semester Conversion.

Representatives of public schools and community colleges should be asked to meet with the committee when issues involving those groups are discussed.

"Campuses should be given considerable discretion in how they organize their curricula," said the recommendation. "We probably need to agree on

beginning and ending dates of each term and have some general understanding about course numbers and general education requirements."

An expected staff report on alternatives for funding intercollegiate athletics at the University and OSU is not on the agenda for the Jan. 16 State Board meeting. But Hunt Holsapple, ticket manager for the University Athletic Department, said a move to the semester system would definitely help athletics. "We usually have anywhere from one to three home football games before school is in session. Before the students are on campus, we can sell maybe 1,000 tickets. When they're back, we can sell between 3,000 and 6,000 depending on the game."

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shops gain new customers as well.

Laurie Brooks-Headley, manager of Eugene's Flower Home, believes that businesses in this area need to diversify.

"In June when the students leave, it can be really slow. There is a drastic reduction in foot traffic. During those months, there are no students to depend on. We do a lot of business with Sacred Heart General Hospital," she said.

Greene and Leppmann agree that one reason why some businesses do well in this area is the fact that students appreciate the personalized service, good quality and competitive prices offered.

Fifteen of these area businesses, as well as Sacred Heart General Hospital, have joined

together to form the University Small Business Association, an organization set up to provide members a place to discuss problems that affect the entire University business community.

Problems don't seem to stem from the students or other customers, Greene said. In the past two years, the major issues facing the USBA have been the lack of parking, street alcoholics and panhandlers harassing customers and the prevention of shoplifting.

"Shoplifting is not a major problem here," Greene said. "We usually deal with prevention rather than punitive action. We show businesses how to prevent shoplifting from occurring rather than stress the importance of punishment."

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discuss Cray playing on Jagger's new solo album, and Cray expects to record with Jagger in February or March.

"I enjoy playing more than anything else," Cray says. "There's something about holding that guitar, something about getting up on stage to tell that story. When I'm up there, that's all that matters," he says.

It's taken Cray and his band 13 years of determination to get to their present status. For other local Northwest bands, Cray says don't give up hope and keep playing.

"If you enjoy playing the music that you do, no matter what it is, stick with it. The thing is, it sometimes takes a while to get exactly where you want to be, but the most important thing is you have to like what you are doing. When people see that you enjoy what you

are doing, then for one thing, you will be doing it a lot better, and people can see that and will react to that," he says.

The Robert Cray Band will

be performing Sunday night at 8 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom. Tickets are \$7.50 for students and \$8.50 for the general public.

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