

Oregon Daily Emerald

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1991

EUGENE, OREGON

VOLUME 93, ISSUE 42

Origin of AIDS continues to baffle doctors, patients

By Tammy Batey
Emerald Reporter

Richard, 40, found out he was HIV positive in 1980. He said at the time he was "totally devastated" and thought he was going to die. However, Richard is still alive today, almost 12 years after his diagnosis.

Richard said he takes no anti-viral drugs and never has. He attributes his good health to his positive attitude.

"Back then no one was living more than a year," he said. "I think I worked really hard at staying well. It's attitude. Spirituality is the most important thing in my life. I believe in a science of the mind. You manifest what you think and if you think you're going to die, you're right."

Richard has a unique theory about the origins of AIDS. Richard said he believes AIDS has a "strongly spiritual purpose." He said he believes a group of people agreed with a divine being to have AIDS in order to educate others.

"There was an essence group, a group of people who agreed to do this because it teaches something," he said. "That essence group was gay men. For every gay man that dies of AIDS there are at least five people who are affected who didn't know he was gay."

"(AIDS) is a forced realization for society to deal with something it wasn't willing to deal with. Having to deal with homosexuality makes people rethink their role — what's good and bad about loving."

The history of AIDS is difficult to trace but there are many theories. Medical professionals point to the 1950s as the time when the disease first ap-



peared.

James Jackson, M.D., of the University Student Health Center said the medical community believes the HIV virus closely resembles an animal virus but "HIV is a human virus," he said.

Viruses similar to the HIV virus have been found in animals, he added.

The AIDS virus may have made its way into humans from African green monkeys. A study conducted by Dr. Max Essex of the Harvard School of Public Health found that 42 percent of a group of healthy green monkeys had blood that contained the AIDS virus. (Slaff, James, M.D., *The AIDS Epidemic*.)

Tissue and blood samples were taken from people who died of mysterious

causes during the 1950s, said Heather Penman, coordinator of the Acorn Club, a recreational club for people who are HIV positive. During the 1980s, doctors determined from the frozen tissue that these people had died of AIDS.

An example is the case of a 28-year-old male, called R.G., which is mentioned in *The History of AIDS* by Mirko Grmek. On February 20, 1952, R.G. was admitted to the Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. with a diagnosis of "viral pneumonia." He had always been well until two weeks earlier, when he developed general malaise, fever, cough and respiratory difficulties.

A biopsy of a skin lesion on R.G.'s body revealed a non-specific, chronic inflammatory reaction. His white blood cell count dropped and antibiotics had only a minimal effect. The patient apparently made some progress and was released from the hospital. R.G. was re-admitted two and a half months later

Turn to AIDS, Page 3



Photo by Jeff Paslay

Taking time to identify the flora and fauna along the trails of Alton Baker Park are part of David Wagner's (center) one-hour fall and spring walks.

Guide leads walks down nature's path

By Carrie Dennett
Emerald Associate Editor

To most observers, a walk along the many jogging and biking trails near Alton Baker Park yields little more than your basic trees, grass and blackberry bushes.

However, a little guidance and a sharp eye reveals a wide variety of flora and fauna that turn the landscape into a colorful and constantly changing environment.

To share the varieties of plants and other wildlife with the community, University Herbarium Director David Wagner leads one-hour walks during fall and spring.

Wagner began these walks when he first arrived at the University 15 years ago.

"I was new to the area, and I decided that I would go out once a week to acquaint myself with the native plants," he said. "Because I was going out anyway, I thought I would open them up to other people who were interested in going along."

Wagner has always offered spring walks, but the fall walks began only six years ago. The fall walks run through Dec. 12, rain or shine, every Thursday except Thanksgiving. The hour walks begin at noon, leaving from the north end of the Autzen foot bridge.

"The spring walks are by far the most popular," he said. "On an average day in the fall we might get a dozen people showing up, but in

the spring we get about 30."

On the walks, Wagner identifies the varieties of plants encountered along the paths. In the spring, the number of identifiable species can reach 100, so energy is directed toward locating plants that have bloomed only in the past week.

"The Willamette riverside woodland area is one of the most significant examples of native riverside vegetation in an urban area," he said.

The most valuable area, in a 1,000-foot radius around the north end of the Autzen footbridge, is being proposed as a nature sanctuary, Wagner said.

"We need it because the people who have been main-

Turn to WALKS, Page 3

Measles shot a must to register in spring

By Colleen Pohlig
Emerald Reporter

Beginning spring term, students whose medical files show they have not been vaccinated for measles will not be allowed to register for classes.

The decision, made recently by Gerald Fleischli, director of the University Student Health Center, is a public health measure that Fleischli said he hopes will get students into the health center to be vaccinated.

Two measles shots are required in order to be vaccinated. However, most people were vaccinated with the first shot when they were babies. Cases of people who have not received their first shot are almost non-existent, said Judy Moffit, the health center's head nurse.

The health center has been mailing notices to more than 2,000 students whose medical records show they have not had the second vaccination.

Fleischli said students who have received a letter but know they have been vaccinated should report to the center to set their medical records straight.

"The reason we are doing this is because measles might seem like a minor illness but it really does have a fatality rate," he said.

The case fatality rate for the illness in the United States is one in 500 to one in 1,000.

The health center gives a combination measles, mumps and rubella injection for \$2, a considerable price difference from the \$31 students will have to pay once the health center's supply of the vaccination is depleted.

"We have a limited supply of the vaccine and when it is gone, we don't think we are going to be able to offer the injection for \$2 anymore," Moffit said.

Fleischli said it is possible to waive the requirement for pregnancy, allergy or religious reasons.

"If they do waive it and if there should be an outbreak again, they would be excluded from class for their protection," he said.

The most recent measles outbreak at the University was in the spring of 1990.

INDEX



Better Duck

Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award candidate Steve Emtman is just one of the Husky defenders the Ducks will have to contend with in Seattle's Husky Stadium.

Oregon Coach Rich Brooks said he thinks the Coaches are the best team he's ever seen in the Pacific-10 Conference.

See story, Page 8