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THE REBEL YELL

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HIV: Four ways to contract through contact

by Stephanie Penner

According to Ray Rodriguez, Student Health Center health educator, there are four ways to contract the human immune deficiency virus, HIV. Unprotected sexual contact, sharing injectable drug needles, receiving blood or blood products before 1985 and being born to an infected mother increase the chances of acquiring HIV.

He said during sexual contact, infected blood, semen and vaginal secretions have an increased chance of passing HIV.

"During intercourse the penis and vagina will get minute

tears and these body fluids can get into those tears," Rodriguez said. He said acquiring HIV through oral sex has a slightly lower risk factor than intercourse.

Rodriguez said the sharing of infected injectable drug needles is another way of contracting HIV. He said sharing drug needles does not pertain solely to drug abusers but legitimate drug users as well, such as diabetics.

People who received blood or blood products before 1985 are at a greater risk of having HIV. "Since 1985 all collected blood has been routinely tested

for HIV. Some infected blood may still get through because the HIV antibody has not formed yet," Rodriguez said. "One blood sample out of every 75,000 is actually infected." This is the latest statistic from the centers for disease control.

Rodriguez said there is a one in three chance of a fetus acquiring HIV through an infected mother.

"There is no blood passed between mother and infant until the actual birth," Rodriguez said. "The placenta only passes nutrients and antibodies and most infants are born testing positive for the HIV an-

tibody test."

Rodriguez explained the infant will carry the antibody but not necessarily have HIV.

"Infants do not have their own immune system," he said, "so they adopt their mother's antibodies and over time the antibodies will be flushed out of the infant's body unless the baby truly is infected with HIV. There

is also the chance the baby can contract HIV through breast milk."

Rodriguez said acquiring HIV through "kissing, casual contact, swimming pools or food" has never been reported.

"HIV is 100 percent preventable through education and personal awareness," Rodriguez said.

Graf joins Peace Corps

by William Holt

When 26-year-old UNLV graduate student Brain Graf did research about the AIDS epidemic during his work for Aid for AIDS of Nevada (AFAN), he "... realized how pathetic the situation is; how slow the government is in reacting to the disease and how people refuse to accept how fast it is spreading."

Because of his experience, Graf has chosen to participate in the battle against AIDS by joining the Peace Corps in Guinea, West Africa, where he said in some areas the disease has taken some 50 to 60 percent of the population.

"It's an opportunity of a lifetime," Graf said. "It's doing exactly what I want to do, being assigned to a health clinic for AIDS prevention."

In Guinea, he'll be making education efforts in helping citizens prevent catching the disease. He'll be travelling to several villages in that area offering whatever help to the villagers he can.

"If, for instance, a village needs a better type of water system, I'll have to assess the problem and try to determine some type of solution," Graf said. "It's going to be a hell of a

challenge."

He said there won't be any plumbing where he's going, no electricity, and his only source of transportation will be a mountain bike. He'll be staying in Senegal, Africa for the first three and a half months, then moving on to Guinea for a total of about two and a half years. He leaves in the beginning of June.

At the end of the spring semester, Graf will receive his masters in political science at UNLV. In addition to working with AFAN, he has worked in the AIDS outpatient clinic at the University Medical Center (UMC) in connection with his masters thesis.

He currently works as a POS 101 discussion lab assistant, has also been the President of the Graduate Student Body for the past two years and had previously worked for 3 years in Washington, D.C. as a student aid. He described his job in D.C. as "... a stagnate existence. I didn't like the eight to five hour routine at all. I wanted an exciting challenge. That's why I chose the Peace Corps."

When Graf leaves the Peace Corps in about 3 years, his plan is to try to enter the field of political special interest groups lobbying for AIDS research and prevention.

Las Vegas is an ideal spot for catching wind

by William Holt

There are many wind sports such as hang gliding, skydiving, wind surfing and ultra-light flying. One of the newest and "purest" forms of wind sports is paragliding. All it takes is a canopy and a body, and a person can remain airborne for hours, sometimes at altitudes of up to 20,000 feet.

Paragliding is literally riding the wind. A pilot merely hikes to a suitable hill or ridge, lays a canopy behind him/her and runs down the hill. In an area that is known for having constant air lift, a pilot can be suspended and travel for miles by controlling the angle that his canopy is carried. Some types of air lifts are in either a coast line that is lined with a ridge and creates dynamic lift (deflected air), or in valley areas such as Las Vegas where there is thermal lift, or rising air.

In its six years as a sport, paragliding has created hundreds of schools, has some 100,000 paragliding pilots throughout Europe and is now gaining popularity in the United States with over 800 pilots.

There are five schools spread throughout America. One of them is the British School of Paragliding (BSP) with



Paraglider lands softly after another successful flight.

Patrick Sugrue, founding member and chief club instructor. The American Paragliding Association (APA) governs paragliding, offers insurance coverage, provides licenses and certifies instructors.

Sugrue has brought the school to Las Vegas because "Las Vegas is an ideal spot for paragliding. It's perfect." He expects the number of paragliding pilots in the United States to exponentiate within the next few years like it did in Europe.

Sugrue said paragliding is much like hang gliding but is not as expensive and takes much less time to master as a skill. He said it can take two to three years to become a competent hang glider while a paragliding student can be prepared within a number of weeks.

He said the sport is affordable and accessible. The BSP offers courses starting at \$100. After purchasing all of the necessary equipment, a person can

expect to pay up to \$3,000.

"The reason we do it is not because we can't fly Cessnas. It's because we love it," Sugrue said. He also said many people who fly for an airline or the air force paraglide as a hobby.

"When man dreamt of flying, he wasn't thinking about sitting in a cockpit. He wanted to float through the air and see the world from a bird's perspective," Sugrue said. Its simplistic design is why paragliding can be described as the purest form of flying for man.

He said paragliding is statistically safer than skiing or horseback riding. He also said the club is conservation oriented. "If we see rubbish at our site, we'll clean it up. We want to make everybody happy so that we can continue to enjoy the freedom of flying."

For more information about the BSP, call Sugrue at (702) 896-6000.

Litter lasts

Cigarette butts	1-5 years
Aluminum cans & tabs	500 years
Glass bottles	1,000 years
Plastic bags	10-20 years
Plastic coated paper	5 years
Plastic film containers	20-30 years
Nylon fabric	30-40 years
Leather	up to 50 years
Wool socks	1-5 years
Orange & banana peels	up to 2 years
Tin cans	50 years
Plastic six-pack holders	100 years
Plastic bottles & styrofoam	indefinitely

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