WEST NILE (from pg. 1)

Department, confirmed receiving the crow. The crow was then sent to Richmond where it tested positive as a carrier of West Nile virus.

While birds are a common carrier of the disease, it can only be transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. West Nile virus can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord). A mosquito can become infected after biting a bird carrying the virus. The mosquito can carry the disease for about 10 to 14 days, during which it can transmit the virus to humans.

Most people who are infected with the virus do not get sick; only about one in 200 people infected get seriously ill and only about 10 to 15 percent of those who get ill actually die. The majority of people infected with West Nile virus have recovered. The virus cannot be transmitted directly from birds to humans or from human to human. There is no vaccination for West Nile virus at this time, but once a person has been infected they are unlikely to contract the disease again.

West Nile virus originated in Uganda, Africa, where it was first isolated in 1937. Africa, Europe and the Middle East have all experienced epidemics of the virus. The largest outbreak in the United States occurred in New York in 1999. Fifty-nine humans were infected with the disease and seven died.

Currently in the Rockingham County/Harrisonburg area, 16 birds have tested positive for West Nile Virus. A total of 41 birds have been turned in for testing. Every county in the state of Virginia has tested birds for the virus. Sixteen counties have not discovered positive cases.

No humans have tested positive in the Harrisonburg area, but there have been 20 probable cases in Virginia. Loudoun County and Fairfax have the only three confirmed cases. Loudoun County and Fairfax have each experienced one death that may be related to the virus.

Kurtz does not see the virus as a problem for the EMU and Parkview communities. "The birds are only carriers and the "changes in weather and the drought seem to be minimizing the factors [crucial to the spread of the virus]."

Good pointed out that the situation could be "more serious for the elderly or those with more compromised health," but not necessarily for the community as a whole. "As long as people practice the guidelines set by the [VDH], they should be fine," he said. "Birds are only a reservoir for the virus, but mosquitoes are the real danger."

BUDGET

(from pg. 1)

a large allotment [of federal financial aid]." However, Hensley noted that this year, "We are not receiving the increases we expected."

The Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (VTAG) has actually decreased. The VTAG, which is available to Virginia residents, is currently at $2,625, a decrease of roughly $400 from last year's figures.

Universities and institutions across the board are suffering due to the current financial situation in the United States. "There is nowhere to hide in this market," quoted Piper.

Piper states that long-term investments, at roughly $15.2 million, have fallen nearly $5 million in the last two years. According to Piper, the past two years were the first in the last 16 that EMU had negative returns in its long-term investments. Piper said that currently, "that's typical of endowments.

"EMU's long-term investments are handled by the Memnonic Board of Education. This year's enrollment numbers have not met what was projected. The actual number of full-time undergraduate equivalents fell 14 percent (vs. the projected number of 950. "That's the number that needs to be made up," said Kevin Longenecker, Business Office controller.

Programs such as the Adult Degree Completion Program and graduate programs, which are experiencing increased enrollment this year, are helping to relieve some of the deficit in this area.

EMU placed a freeze on hiring on August 30, 2002 in an attempt to control the "financial exigencies" of the university. "The decision was made at the point we realized that cuts would be necessary in the preliminary budget for 2002-2003 that was adopted last March," said Piper. "Departments are also attempting to identify areas where spending can be curtailed. There will not be any university-funded departmental Christmas parties, Piper said, although the annual Christmas tea will still be held.

Longenecker has pointed out that the water coolers placed in various academic areas on campus cost about $30 a year, or $3,000 total. "That's not going to save $100,000," admitted Longenecker, "but I think it does two things. It is going to save energy and it communicates a message that says, 'Hey, we're doing what we can this year to balance this out.'"

"The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) suggests [WCF] they should be on as usual for WCSC students. Even so, day-to-day life goes on as usual for, "I've found a passion and real purpose in what I'm doing," said Lengacher. "I've never considered pastoring before because the Memnonic Church has not traditionally encouraged it for women. At WCF, however, I've found this little world opened up for me because of it’s multi-denominational flavor. What has been a wonderful experience and a time of exploration is now potentially a future career for me."

In addition to classes and internships, however, the greatest learning for WCF students probably comes from the experience of simply being in an urban setting. Students welcome the feeling of anonymity that comes with riding on buses and walking the sidewalk without anyone recognizing them. The city also provides a wealth of places to eat or grab a coffee, museums to browse, shows to see and protests to march in.

And sometimes, living in DC makes national news feel much closer to home. Monday night, students sat around the TV in the living room watching news of the ten sniper shootings in two weeks.

Even though the shootings have largely been happening outside the city itself, students are starting to express some sense of nervousness. Assistant Professor of Psychology Herm Weaver is scheduled to meet with the group next Wednesday night to process any anxiety they are having related to the shootings.

Even so, day-to-day life goes on as usual. "For what I've been doing," said Lengacher. "We're not really here for ourselves. We're still got to do what we do every day."