

Planning for the Centre's courses for the year has started at a fast pace with enrolments in courses growing. The new Bioethics postgraduate course *Master of Bioethics and Health Law*, has attracted a healthy amount of interest. Enrolment figures for the program have been encouraging, with students from both medical and law backgrounds applying for entry.

As mentioned in the last issue *Theories of Biomedical Ethics* is being distance taught in Christchurch this year. This is being done through a combination of block courses led by Centre staff and regular tutorials utilising the skills and knowledge of Christchurch's **Jim Thornton** and **John Morton**. The first semester block course is a combined event with Dunedin and Christchurch students involved, and taking place in the first week of term. Centre staff have been busy ensuring that course participants will find sessions stimulating and motivating for the year to come.

Alex Lautensach and **John McMillan** are teaching a University Extension course late in this semester. The course is open to the public and will be held over four nights. They are planning to offer participants a hands on introduction to Bioethics (for more details see *Notice* in this issue)

Alex has been busy readying the Centre's distance education programme (see his report on his activities in this issue). As a biologist he has developed a personal as well as professional interest in animals (pictured with one of his friends).

The Bioethics Centre is also teaching a module in research ethics as part of a new paper for Health Sciences students (*Research Methods for Health Sciences*).

On Monday March 13 the Centre is holding a *Hypothetical* on "whistle-blowing". For those of you have not been exposed to "Hypotheticals" they are public meetings at which we explore (with the aid of a panel and a moderator) some hypothetical cases which raise ethical dilemmas. All those who are interested are very welcome to come along.

The Centre has a number of high profile overseas visitors this semester. We are fortunate that two visiting experts are able to participate in the March 13 *Hypothetical*. **Ian Freckelton** is a Barrister and Solicitor for the Supreme Courts of three Australian states as well as publishing internationally in the area of expert evidence. (For more details of Ian Freckelton's visit see the *Visitors to the Centre* column this issue). **Professor**



Graham Mellsop, formerly Professor of Psychological Medicine in Wellington School of Medicine, is now Director of Regional Mental Health Services in Queensland.

Professor Ronald Bayer from the "School of Public Health" at Columbia University, will also be visiting this year. He will be a keynote speaker at the Public Health Association Conference June 27 to 30. Details of Professor Bayer's visit will be published in the next issue of the *Report*.

Other likely visitors to the Centre this year include **Professor Ruth Chadwick** (UK), **Dr Robert Veatch** (USA) and **Dr Stanley Hauerwas** (USA).

The achievements of the Centre have been recognised in a joint accreditation exercise of the whole of the Medical Faculty by the Australian and the New Zealand Medical Council. The 1994 Council Accreditation Document states:

The biomedical ethics group is a model for biomedical ethics teaching in medical schools. The extent of its integration within and across departments of the University, such as philosophy and law, and its integration into five years of the medical course is to be admired.

Grant Gillett's eminence as a scholar in bioethics was recognised by the University by his promotion to a Personal Chair from February 1995.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COURSE

Keep an ear to the ground for the Bioethics Research Centre, Otago Medical School, Community Education course due to run for four evenings in May.

The aim of the course is to introduce members of the public to some of the ethical foundations and thought processes that underpin the decisions that have to be made when our actions involve other living entities.

The four sessions will give a general overview of the field, and cover cloning and manipulation of human genes, reproductive technology, policy, individual actions, and look at questions or topics chosen by participants, for example medical ethics.

Presenters are: Alex Lautensach and John McMillan in conjunction with the Otago University Continuing Education Unit.

It will provide an ideal opportunity to voice some of those nitty gritty questions and hopefully to thrash out some answers.

For enrolment ring:
Catherine on 477 0345 at the Continuing Education Unit,
90 St David Street, Dunedin.