

Bush gives advice to teenagers

By Meredith Harris

Barbara Bush has five schools named in her honor and a new blue convertible. But most importantly, the former First Lady has wonderful ethics, energy that doesn't quit and the will to serve others. She spoke on her ethics and beliefs on Nov. 21 at Wesleyan College's Dunn Center.

Senior Jamie Gilbert, juniors Brent Rowe and Ben Collins, and sophomore Emily Barnes attended the Forum. "She is caring and encourages strong family values," Collins said.

Rowe agreed and said, "Her speech was bipartisan. It was funny and interesting."

"She's a great lady," Gilbert said. "She's so personable, and she's not out for publicity. It's great that she is willing to come to a town the size of Rocky Mount and promote literacy."

Barnes said, "She an example of everything still good in this country."

United States history teacher Vann Cutts also listened to Bush speak. "I thoroughly enjoyed it. She is unpretentious, down to earth, and sincere. That is what makes her so popular," he said.

Bush's main cause is family literacy. "I believe, and so do the experts, that if more people could read, write, and comprehend, we would be that much closer to solving so many of the problems plaguing our society today," she said. Bush wrote three books: *C. Fred's Story*, *Millie's Book*, whose profits benefited the literacy cause, and her autobiography, *Barbara Bush: A Memoir*. She helped to form the

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy in 1990.

Bush also stressed character values, having self-confidence, and being a positive influence in a child's life. She said, "Character is knowing the difference between right and wrong. And character does count. Our children come first. Their first school is the home." Bush said that one way to make a positive impact on a child's life is to "be involved in a cause bigger than yourself." She told a story of a teacher and a student:

"In the fifth grade, Teddy was in Mrs. Thompson's class. Teddy was a dirty kid, kind of smelly and ugly, too. Mrs. Thompson had heard bad things about Teddy, about his mother's sickness and how his father was hardly around. All of Teddy's other teachers had promoted him to the next grade at the end of each school year to get him out of their classes. Mrs. Thompson always said she loved each child the same, but she knew in her heart that she really didn't like Teddy. That year, Teddy's mother died; Teddy's grades didn't improve at all, and his home life was still bad.

At Christmas, all the children brought Mrs. Thompson gifts, even Teddy. "Thank you so much!" she said, as she sat down and opened each of the neatly wrapped presents. After all the other presents had been unwrapped and Mrs. Thompson thanked the children, Teddy handed her his gift, wrapped in messy paper with a ragged ribbon. Mrs. Thompson opened the small box and found a silver bracelet and a half-empty bottle of perfume. The other children snickered and stared, but Mrs. Thompson had enough sense to slide



Contributed photo

PEP TALK--Barbara Bush told inspirational stories of having self-confidence. "You have to believe in yourself," she said.

the bracelet on her wrist and dot the perfume on her neck. "Thank you, Teddy. It's lovely," she said.

After class, Teddy said, "Mrs. Thompson, you smell just like my mother did."

Years later, Mrs. Thompson received a letter from Teddy telling her that he graduated second in his high school class. Years after that, she received another letter from Teddy saying that he had graduated first in his college class. He would be

getting married soon, and Teddy invited Mrs. Thompson to sit where his mother would have been seated at the wedding.'

"The simplest things make a difference," Bush said. She also had advice for high school students. "If you do your best, you can succeed," she said. Bush speaks around the country on literacy and character values, encouraging others with her humor, sincerity, and faith.

Confrontation creates concerns for students' safety after school

By Staff writers

Wednesday, the fourth of December, was an average day after school. The cheerleaders had just finished their practice and the basketball practice was just getting started: It was a transition period where the movement of students could possibly cause some confusion. During this time two men who had a previous disagreement with a basketball player came into the building. A fight between the men and some of the basketball team members occurred but was quickly broken up by the coaches in the building.

The students believed that Craig Lane, one of the men, had a gun in his hand. Panic ensued. The students and coaches ran, and later witnesses told police that they heard three gunshots. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Craig Lane. The following day, a physical education teacher found a bullet hole in the door by the room that serves as a weight room and a locker room. A student found a bullet in that vicinity, also.

One of the main concerns of the coaches and students alike was where the security officer was who was supposed to be on the campus at the time. He was off-cam-

pus.

No one at the scene of the confrontation was hurt, but questions as to how safe the after school activities were arose. Since the incident, the night security officer has been instructed not to leave the school grounds while he is on duty, and measures have been taken by the administration to make sure that the gym area is closed off during practice.

"A safe and orderly environment is the number one concern, including extracurricular activities," said Principal Jerry Carter.

One of the main reasons that the school has off-school traffic is its being bordered by city streets on three sides, giving loiterers ample opportunity to sneak onto school grounds during lunches, class changes and after school.

For that reason Carter does not want students to loiter after school hours. He said, "In order for our school to be safe, I must have the support of students in informing me of the presence of people on campus who do not attend the school. I think we've got a real good student body. They'll let me, another administrator or a teacher know if there is a weapon or drugs on campus. We must stay on top on things at all times."

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