



Bridgette Parker and her roommate at the Thanksgiving Dinner.

## SGA President-elect

by Beth M. Blankenship

Bridgette Parker is Meredith College's Student Government President-elect.

First slate filing speeches were February 1 and voting occurred the following Tuesday.

Despite the lowest turnout for voting in Meredith's history, Bridgette is optimistic about the future of student participation at Meredith.

"I'm concerned about the lack of support," Bridgette said.

"The whole system is threatened by this, and it's up to the SGA to do something about it."

Bridgette is no stranger to the SGA organization. She has served as SGA treasurer and is presently SGA Vice-President.

"Meredith is a special place because

it offers women the opportunity to serve," said Bridgette.

"I'm concerned with the direction Meredith is taking."

Bridgette wants to continue on a leadership role through her career.

She wants to go into either a field of business or into a government-related job.

"I always want to be involved in my church and community."

"I want to continue to learn new skills."

When Bridgette's not planning for the SGA, she likes to roadtrip.

"I'm one of these people who'll just pick up and go on the spur of the moment," Bridgette said.

"I just love to go!"

Bridgette is from Pine Level, N.C.

## Elections: Lack of concern

by Caroline Powell

Offices are not being filled, and many who run are unopposed. Why aren't students running for office at Meredith? Is it a lack of concern, other interests, or disappointment in present organizations? We need to know why students are not getting involved and what we can do about it.

Perhaps one reason is that many students have a job as well as a full load of college work. With financial problems in our economy, students work to help with expenses. This takes time away from school. Also, the changing role of women encourages women to concentrate on job experience leading to a career. We want to be prepared for the job market.

However, we can get experience right here on campus. We can become better leaders and organizers by getting involved in Meredith groups. By holding responsible positions, we can gain skills that will be valuable in future careers. For example, serving as treasurer, we learn to handle finances. As an Honor Council member, we become acquainted with the law field. There are many more positions that cater to future careers.

A second reason for vacant offices is the students' lack of knowledge about particular positions. We don't know where to begin, because we think the structure of a group, like the Student Life Committee or Honor Council, is too complex. Maybe we're not sure of an organization's purpose and feel unqualified

to do the job.

If we take the time, though, we can answer questions like these by talking to someone who has held a particular position or to an advisor of an organization. Perhaps present leaders should encourage more students to run for office. Before election time, flyers with brief job descriptions and objectives could be sent to students. We, as fellow students, should express confidence in someone who is qualified and tell her she'd be a great president, or senator, or whatever.

Probably the most serious reason for vacant offices at Meredith is apathy. Students lack interest and concern. If we are disappointed in current organizations and use that as an excuse not to get involved, we are not being responsible. We should help make changes. We need to ask questions, make suggestions, and most importantly, take action. A good way to become interested in an organization is to participate in one of its projects. MCA sends groups to Dorothea Dix and Governor Morehead School for the Blind; class officers plan fund raisers and activities. The list goes on. In order to revive an interest in Meredith organizations, we need to commit time and energy to them.

If we feel that morale is low concerning elections, we need to make some improvements. As a community of closely-knit women, we should encourage participation and get involved in organizations. Working together, we can fill the offices and boost morale.

## Student Services key in retention

[NOCR] Improving student services helped eight colleges substantially boost their retention rates in a three-year field experiment by the Higher Education Research Institute at the U. of California—Los Angeles.

The experiment involved eight private, liberal arts schools in Southern California, all of which were operating under capacity at the outset. Led by Dr. J. Victor Baldrige, the three-year "action project," as he describes it, increased annual retention by as much as 35% and caused substantial increases in freshman and four-year retention as well.

The project, funded by a \$371,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation, saved the eight colleges hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost tuition and fees, says Baldrige. None of the colleges hired new people for the project; they merely redirected existing resources.

The most effective strategies for keeping students in school proved to be: Improved student housing; special programs for commuters; extended orienta-

tion and counseling services, particularly for minorities; and innovative curricula.

Individual retention plans were designed for each college, based on their particular problems, but using these general strategies.

Seven of the eight colleges increased freshman retention, slowing the traditionally high drop-out rate between the freshman and sophomore years. One school saw an 11% increase.

Five of the eight increased their four-year retention rate, i.e., the number of people who entered as freshmen and eventually graduated. One increased it 28%. Research Institute spokeswoman Terry Weiner says all eight began with negative numbers in these categories three years ago. All eight colleges also realized increases in annual retention, that is, gross enrollment.

"Attracting and retaining students is becoming an issue of the most critical importance," says Baldrige, since the number of traditional college-age people is dropping, the cost of college is up, and financial aid is less available.

## Inside CCL

Working on a project in the library and want to stop having to carry all your materials back and forth from your room or car? Carlyle Campbell library can help. There are 30 locked cabinets on the ground floor which are there for you to use. They are assigned on a semester-to-semester basis when you pay a refundable \$1.00 key deposit. Ask at the circu-

lation desk for information.

And don't walk by the Bach 300th anniversary display just inside the front entrance of the library without stopping to see if you can answer any or all of the questions. An example is "Bach applied unsuccessfully for the position of organist of St. James, Hamburg in 1721. Who was chosen for the post?"

The TWIG would like to congratulate these new officers for the 1985-86 school year.

RHA Chairman - Lizzy Mills  
Student Life Comm. Chairman - Renee Godwin  
Chief Student Advisor - Jonelle Davis  
CCA Treasurer - Elizabeth Hornthal  
CCA Vice-President - Sophie Grady  
MCA Secretary - Beth Shannon  
MCA Vice-President - Marcia Taylor  
MRA Vice-President - Donna Gibson  
SGA Treasurer - Donna Wilson  
RHA Treasurer - Ruth Ponder  
Student Life Comm. Secretary - Angie Stroud  
Upper Class Hall Pres. - Senior-Jeanette Whitley  
Junior-Connie Compton  
Sophomore-Felicia Blount

### COLLEGE REPUBLICAN MEETING

Wednesday

February 27, 1985

7:30 p.m.

104 Joyner Reception Room

Everyone is welcome!

We're talking about the  
Upcoming Elections!