

Little Friends Weekend brings out the children in campus hostesses

by Julie Smith

March 21-22 marked the beginning of the annual Little Friends Weekend. This year's theme was "The Rainbow Connection." One hundred and two excited, screaming, smiling little friends invaded Meredith College awaiting their eighty-two hostesses. The little friends arrive on either Friday or Saturday to start their adventures. I questioned several children, and the majority said the weekend was FUN! One little girl, Jessica, said her favorite activity was feeding the ducks. Feeding the ducks was not one of the planned activities, but was fun all the same. Planned activities on Saturday provided several choices: t-shirt painting, Mousercizing, eating, field day events, scavenger hunting, and dancing at a sock hop. The weekend came to an end with a chapel service and slide show on Sunday.

The steady yells of excitement and pattering little feet brought back to mind childhood memories. I participated in the big softball game. It was the most fun I've had in a long time. The kids and the volunteers shared laughs and pats on the back and the kids gave the hostesses a chance to see the world again through a child's eyes. Marion Grizzard and Dana Roberson co-chaired this event, and they did a great job. They would like to thank Laura Pierce, Liza Clement, Stephanie Hubbard, Laura Davenport, Melanie Overby, MCA, MEA, and ARA for their contributions. Marion said the event "went smoothly" and was a "great success!"

Meredith alumnae to star in local performance of *Showboat*

Two Meredith College alumnae—Mary Sanderson Porter of Smithfield and Debbie Dunn Elam of Four Oaks—will be starring in the roles of "Julie Laverne" and "Ellie Chipley" when the Neuse Little Theatre and Johnston County Choral Society present Edna Ferber's immortal "Show Boat."

Showtime is at 8 p.m. on April 25 and May 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9 in the new 1,000 seat auditorium at Johnston Community College at Smithfield.

Advance tickets are \$5 for groups of 25 or more; \$7 for groups of 10 to 24; and \$8 for individuals and groups of less than 10. Admission at the door will be \$12. Reservations can be made by calling 919-934-1873.

Also in the large cast are Mrs. Porter's 9-year-old daughter, Mary-Margaret, who plays "Kin," the daughter of the sweet and innocent Magnolia Hawks and the dashing gambler Gaylord Revenal; and Mrs. Elam's 6-year-old daughter, Alice Ann, who plays a child.

Mrs. Porter, who holds a degree in home economics from Meredith, is a former "Miss Duplin County" who has designed award-winning evening gowns and swimsuits for contestants in the "Miss North Carolina," "Miss South Carolina," and "Miss Tennessee" pageants.

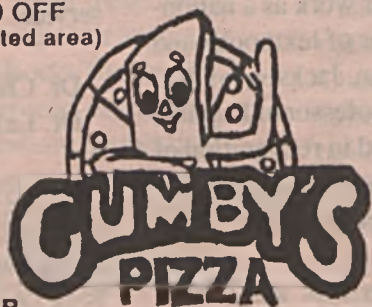
She has been a chancel choir and handbell choir director in Warsaw, and is now involved in designing and marketing a line of children's wear.

She has been doing vocal solo work for many years, and "Show Boat" will be her acting debut. She said she is proud to be creating the role of Julie in Johnston County, the birthplace of Ava Gardner, who played Julie in the 1951 MGM movie version of "Show Boat."

Mrs. Elam, who will receive a degree in musical theatre from Meredith in May, has performed in Village Dinner Theatre productions of "Hello, Dolly" and "Shenandoah." In 1991, she played "Marian the Librarian" in the Neuse Little Theatre's presentation of "The Music Man."

A former "Miss Dunn," Mrs. Elam has been a dancer and singer at the "Miss N.C." pageant and was recently director of the "Junior Miss Four Oaks" pageant. She is president of the Johnston County Young People's Theatre and is director of the choir of Four Oaks Baptist Church.

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