

News Briefs

compiled by Addie Tschamler

- Monday the White House accused anti-abortion "extremists" of pushing Senate Republicans to reject the nomination of Dr. Henry Foster as surgeon general as a political payoff for their help in the midterm elections.
- Continental Airlines announced on Monday that it will begin offering three round-trip flights at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on May 1. This will make Continental the third new carrier to move into RDU since American Airlines began downsizing its hub a year ago. Air South began flights in November and Midway Airlines says it will begin next month.
- Gov. Jim Hunt said Monday he would eliminate nearly 2,000 state jobs, increase college tuition, close two prisons and a school for the deaf, and trim other state services to pay for \$483 million in tax cuts.
- Nationally, employers paid 1.1 percent less in 1994 than in 1993. Managed-care plans seemed to figure heavily in the change, according to a widely quoted annual survey. Managed-care refers to the practice of controlling costs by restricting patients to certain hospitals and doctors.
- In world news, Russians and Chechens have agreed to safeguard their people with a limited truce that halts the use of heavy artillery. And when talks resume Wednesday, the adversaries plan to devise ways to exchange bodies and prisoners of war.

Weems addresses student concerns

Dear Meredith Students:

It has come to my attention that some of you think Meredith has made a decision to become a community college or a technical institute. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our mission and purpose is to educate women in a liberal arts tradition. While Meredith has evolved over the last twenty-five years, it is a much stronger college today and is considered one of the premier institutions of higher education in the state. Meredith has always maintained a strong commitment to its historical core of traditional aged students. Whatever strategies we embark upon in the future will be designed to assure that this commitment can be maintained. Certainly a successful college such as Meredith would have no desire to lessen in any way the very heart of the institution.

Meredith is the fifth (out of 38) largest private college in the state and

the largest women's college in the South. We are debt free and have more than \$30,000,000 in endowment. The budget is balanced, and to my knowledge, Meredith has never run a deficit.

However, everything is not rosy. There are specters of financial problems in the future that must be anticipated and solved now. We are in the position to solve these problems without any detriment to our school if we act quickly. To solve financial problems there are a limited number of options available—cost containment or new revenue generated through new markets. Cost containment without new markets means a reduction in the number of faculty and staff. Revenue through new or expanded markets will allow us to minimize personnel reductions.

Finding the proper solution is going to require input from many sources. We will involve our students, faculty,

staff, alumnae, and trustees. Over the next few weeks I will be talking with representatives from each of these groups. I think we can all benefit from the insights shared with each other.

Whatever the course of action, the results we take will make Meredith stronger. This will ensure that our institution will maintain its commitment to educate women in the liberal arts tradition as we always have.

Sincerely,
John Weems

We need input!

Dear Editor:

During the Feb. 9 meeting, I expressed my support for the concept of re-engineering the college. I also expressed my concern that re-engineering must be done against an agreed-upon vision. I indicated my willingness on behalf of the Alumnae Association to participate in a process to define both the vision and necessary changes for Meredith.

On Feb. 13, I continued this conversation with President Weems. I was assured that Meredith is not in an immediate financial crisis nor is it abandoning its commitment to the traditional student. It did become clear that Meredith must continually examine the market it serves and seek new ways to achieve academic excellence through new programs. While many ideas have been suggested I do not believe that any firm commitments have been made.

President Weems is forming a committee composed of students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumnae, and trustees to study the problems at hand and recommend a course of action for Meredith's future. I am representing the Alumnae Association in this effort.

As an alumna I understand what it means to be a student at Meredith. I am committed to insuring that Meredith continues as an academically excellent women's college serving a diverse population of Meredith women who will become leaders of tomorrow.

Let me know how I can work with you on our behalf.

Sincerely,
Cindy McEnery '70
President of Alumnae Association

Jackson encourages students to speak out

Dear students:

Among the worries I've heard most commonly expressed in the last few days is "I don't want Meredith to become a community college." I do not know anyone who does.

Dr. Weems has voiced some of his ideas for change — among them, for Meredith to offer more classes at night. A student can currently complete her general education requirements within five years by taking classes at night, but social work is the only major offered in the evenings. Now Dr. Weems is asking departments to make other majors available to evening students. As I understand this proposal, these majors would be supplements to the traditional daytime classes and majors. A student completing courses for a major might have to take some of her classes at night, as she does already in some departments, but she would not be required to take all of her classes at night.

Many voices need to be heard on this issue and others over the next weeks and months. If you would like to make known your ideas for change, to voice concerns, and to ask questions, then come to a meeting organized by the Student Government Executive Committee:

SGA Forum on the Future
Monday, 20 February 1995
7:30 p.m.

Jones Chapel

Meredith's future has always depended in large measure on the intelligence of the women who choose to come here. Come to the SGA Forum with ideas and insights which will help Meredith continue to serve well the intellectual, spiritual, and developmental needs of women. Help your SGA officers know your wishes about what needs to be kept, improved, discarded, or initiated.

Yours Sincerely,
Jean Jackson