

## Why are buildings so hot?

by Angela Dawn Hess

Due to the number of questions raised by the heat during our recent warm spell, I spoke with Rick Dunning, the maintenance manager, about how the Meredith heating system works. Meredith's heating and cooling systems are both on one line. The system works by sending hot or cold water through pipes underneath all the buildings on campus from the central boiler room.

Each fall the maintenance department must pick a date on which to switch the system from cooling to heating, and similarly in the spring, from heating to cooling. It takes approximately a week to ten days for the system to be completely switched over. This fall the decision was made to switch to heat in early October due to students' complaints that their dorm rooms were too cold.

Unfortunately, the cold front was followed by a heat wave and the maintenance department was left with their hands tied. Switching the system back to cooling would have taken at least a week, and then it would have taken another week to ten days to be giving us heat in

the below freezing temperatures of the last week.

Dunning did assure me that the heating system was shut off as soon as the weather turned warm, but at that point it was too late. Hot water was already flowing through the pipes. He would like the entire Meredith community to know that our comfort is his first priority, that is why the heat was cut on in the first place. However, having a one-pipe system doesn't leave him many options.

A two-pipe system, one that would allow heating and cooling to occur simultaneously, is being considered, but it will take time to install. The pipes must be run underground to all the buildings on campus once again.

It would be nice if each room had a separate air conditioner, but this leads to obvious expense problems. And asking why Johnson Hall administration building has separate air conditioners is like asking why the President doesn't live in a dorm.

## Does media portray image of candidates in elections?

By Jonna Anderson and Donna Gurganus, guest writers

In our "American Elections in 30 Seconds Flat" class we have studied, among other things, the impact the media has on the image of candidates. We realized that most people based their choice of candidates on commercials and advertisements paid for by parties or PACs (Political Action Committees). This information, while easily obtained, is not always accurate and factual. Therefore to be an informed voter, you are required to do some homework. Who actually does their homework?

On election day, we decided to get out there and see if the Meredith community did their homework before going to the polls. Eighty percent of the students polled thought that the information put out by the media helped them choose the best candidate. They said they received information needed by watching the

materials about the different candidates in the media. Only twenty percent of the students did "homework" and checked web sites, researched voting records and issues and attended rallies to hear candidates speak.

Is it media's goal to portray accurate information and help the public become informed voters? Eighty percent of students polled felt that was not the intended goal of the media. They seemed to believe that media was in it only for the glory. Issues, they said, were not as important to the media as dirt and mudslinging.

The research seems to contradict itself. Why do we base our vote on the media even though we believe that they are not portraying correct information. Why do we look to them for this information? Are we too lazy to become involved if it reaches past the comfort of our own living rooms?

### Security Tip of the Week

If you think you are being followed, cross the street and change directions. If you continue to be followed, move quickly to a public place and call the police.

## Help for needy panhandlers

By Angie Harris, guest writer

Have you ever gotten off the beltline at the Crabtree Valley exit and seen someone holding a sign asking for food, money, or work? I have, numerous times, and each time I felt awkward. I want to help them out, but how? If I gave them \$5, would that help? If I gave them an apple, would that solve their problems? Probably not. So I drive by avoiding their eyes and sinking lower and lower in my seat.

This is a concern a group of Meredith women, including myself, have searched to address through an action project in our Capstone "The Myths We Live By." We wanted to find a way to safely help the people needing money, food or work we see week to week on Hillsborough St., in parks, downtown or at intersections.

We were reminded of this issue not only from our day-to-day experience with begging, but also through recent publicity in the *News and Observer*. It reported that the Raleigh city council recently enacted a law that makes begging a civil offense and imposes a 30-day jail sentence or a \$500 fine in anyone convicted. Does this help the problem? It may get panhandlers off the street, but isn't that what they are looking for?

In light of this, we've searched for a way to educate the Meredith community on how we can help these people we pass daily. We want to distribute information rather than money or food. The Wake County Jobs for the Homeless program publishes a Homeless Services Resource Guide on behalf of Cornerstone, a Homeless Service Center. This pocket-sized guide provides useful information to those who want it. We believe this guide is much more helpful than handing out money, food or just passing by looking the other way.

If anyone is interested in obtaining guides, please contact Cornerstone or Wake County Jobs for the Homeless. Both organizations would be grateful for an increased awareness about this guide or any donations.

We believe that by promoting this resource within the Meredith community, we are taking a step towards helping to discourage panhandling. By distributing the Homeless Resource Guide, we are no longer contributing to the financial profitability of begging, but hopefully giving them a little more.

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