

A mass transit system? Sure. MEREDITH BY TORY HOKE

From the Editor

Have you heard? The city and county governments of the Raleigh-Durham area are thinking about putting in a mass-transit system. Well, it's about time. I'm tired of getting stuck in traffic everywhere I go around here.

It's ridiculous. It can take you up to, if not over, an hour to get from Meredith College past Capital Boulevard.

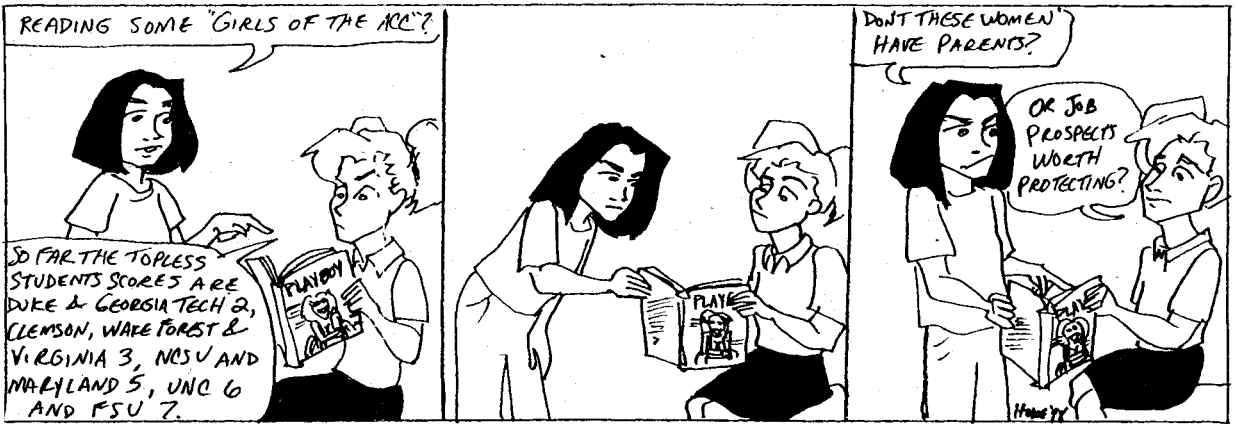
I understand that the RDU area attempted to make local travel better with the recent I-540 loop. Unfortunately, there are still many travelers who are unaware the loop is open; not to mention those drivers who have no clue where the loop leads and don't want to be traveling a desolate route late at night. It's just not safe anymore.

I'm not saying I'm an expert on the highways and transportation systems - that's certainly not the case. However, experience with and without mass transit systems has shown me the benefits - and yes, the costs of such a system. First of all, can you imagine the time factor decreasing? It's possible. It's never going to be a perfect match; however, there would be some improvement.

When I was in Spain this summer, I had the pleasure (sometimes pain) to use the Metro in Madrid. Yes, this is an underground system that took years to create, but it's there. Sure - there are still about 100 cars for every block, but some of the hassle of driving has been eliminated. This is also the case in our nation's capital. Yes, I had the pleasure to experience the DC metro area also this summer, as well as Atlanta's MARTA. These systems are both under and above ground. They're not perfect - there are still delays, but you're not wasting your own gasoline to get from point A to point B.

Both systems have shown me that it's time for Raleigh to look into similar options. I'm glad the initiative is there with our community leaders. Now, let's see if we can get the tax payers onto the idea. Okay- so it seems unfair for me to be advocating more taxes when I won't be contributing my share after May. However, I have been giving plenty of my minimal paychecks over the years to have at least two cents worth of a voice.

If the area could consider putting something between Raleigh, RDU airport and the Research Triangle Park, I bet there would be a greater number of somewhat-pleased travelers. Sure - it's going to cost money and maybe some local land initially, but what about the decreases in gasoline fumes and the trivial, but annoying fender benders on the Beltline. Surely, anyone can see it's a work in progress, so let's not shove it to the back burner anytime soon.



Now is the time for a woman president

BETH HALL  
News Editor

Father knows best?

That seems to be the message Meredith wants to send. Our institution is over 100 years old, and never in that history has a woman been president of our college, the largest women's college in the Southeast. Time after time a man is chosen (by a board of trustees composed mostly of older men) to define what "teaching a woman to excel" means and entails.

Ninety-percent of all women's colleges in the nation have women presidents, according to the Women's College Coalition. Of the four women's colleges in our state—Bennett, Peace, Salem and Meredith—we are the only one which doesn't have a woman president. NCSU and Duke have women chancellors. The president of the entire North Carolina University System is a woman. Do they know something we don't?

These institutions have not just hired these women to be nice. They didn't just hire them, or keep them, just for the sake of having a token woman leader. These women were hired and retained because of their successes as effective leaders.

Having an older man lead this campus of women perpetuates the stereotype that we, as "Meredith girls" have to have male supervision. People who believe in that stereotype think we are merely passed from home

where daddy rules, to school where a father-figure rules, to marriage where a husband rules. I don't think most students see themselves reflected in that mirror. So why do we stand back and let that message—that we are sweet, helpless and submissive—be sent to future employers, to other college institutions, to the community at large?

Right now the opportunity to change that stereotype is in our hands. We need a woman president as a role model we can strive to emulate, and who can more honestly represent us as women than a man possibly could. A woman who has proven herself successful tripping up the leadership ladder despite the challenges of gender discrimination will have relevant experience to present to us as we develop our leadership skills for the future. She will have been there and done that in a male-dominated world.

In fact, what are we saying about ourselves as women if we refuse to credit another woman with the qualifications to lead us? We seem to be saying that we don't trust a woman to have the qualities necessary. Reflexively, does that mean that we couldn't trust ourselves, because we are women, to lead others. I know I'm not willing to say that about myself. There may be a lot of things about myself that keep me from being a leader, but the mere fact that I am a woman is not one of them.

True, we as students don't have the direct power to hire the next president, but we do have the power of influence. The decision of who will lead us into the next century affects us more than any other Meredith constituency. Yes, Meredith is a business, but first and foremost it is a school. Therefore, the group which should have the most influence and power is the student body. More cynically, the reason we should have power is the cold fact that if it were not for our pocketbooks there would be no board of trustees & no Meredith.

And yet, we are letting this power of influence slip through our fingers. How can we, the student body, be so apathetic about something so important as choosing the next leader for our college? When the presidential search committee graciously held public forums a few weeks ago, only six out of approximately 2500 students showed up to give the committees input.

Gene Langley, chair of the committee will continue to receive written comments and suggestions until Oct. 31. I hope students are writing to the committee. I did, but I feel most students aren't. We need to consider the amount of life, time, energy and money we put into this school. Haven't we made too much of a personal investment to casually sluff off our responsibility and ignore the potential power of our voices?

Meredith Herald

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