

Bidding my own farewell

From the Editor

Well, it's here. My final issue. The last *Meredith Herald* of my time here at Meredith. It's my 104th issue and I'm not really sure what to do with my Tuesdays. Can you imagine having a set routine for four years with every Tuesday of your academic life revolving around the

production of a weekly newspaper, including my classes? No. I don't think you could, but you're not alone. There are many times I can't imagine what my life would be like without the *Herald* every Tuesday.

As I'm sitting here in front of the computer trying to put my final thoughts to print, I take a minute to stop and calculate the hours, faces, names and phone numbers from the past four years. I remember working in the old *Herald* office in what's now the game room in Cate Center my freshmen year. I remember working out of a storage closet for the first semester of my sophomore year because our current office was not complete. Junior year, I remember the fire in the dining hall having just put a *Herald* to bed hours before. And this year, what can I say? It's been a year I will always remember with faces I will never forget.

I guess the normal thing for me to do would be to pass the torch on to my successor, Leslie Maxwell. And I shall do just that, but not without thanking a few others beforehand.

First of all, as I said last week, I have to thank my mom for giving me the inner courage to do anything I put my mind to doing. Without her, I would not be me. I also have to be sappy for a moment as I thank the patience and tolerance of the one person who could have managed such a feat, Michael. You could never know what your virtual bouquets and sometimes annoying phone calls in the office meant - love, understanding and encouragement. Right back at you, babe.

Here at school, there are tons of people who have given me the support and knowledge one needs when trying to produce a college newspaper. To my past editors Clarky Lucas, Arinn Dixon and Kim Highland, I thank each of you for the friendship and guidance you gave me when I was a part of each of your staffs. To our advisers Rebecca Duncan and Cheryl Jenkins, without the two of you there would be no money and no article ideas. Of course, Dr. Jackson, what can I say? You have been a source of immense strength and guidance, knowledge and friendship.

To my little sister, Joy, I leave a few thoughts of wisdom - my wisdom anyways: Be true to your values, hold strong to your thoughts and love like you love yourself. After two years of sisterhood, we take with us a connection that will live where ever each of us lives in the future. That's my promise to you.

To any one who has had to live with me here at Meredith, forgive me. I know I keep crazy hours and am always into some project or another, but you could never imagine how much each of you has truly meant to me as a fellow Angel and sister.

To my staff, a simple thank you is not enough. In fact, words cannot express what I feel in my heart with gratitude and admiration for everything each of you has done. Tory and Beth, we are all leaving together and each taking with us a part of the other. For me, I will always cherish Beth's chic sense of style and Tory's heightened sense of humor that no one else can bring to a group. I wish you both all of the luck and love you each deserve.

Leslie, to you I can only express my slight jealousy of your having the opportunity to continue working with this wonderful college and its inner family. There will be ups and downs during your tenure as editor, but don't forget that each downfall is education in itself. Learn from your mistakes, bring glue to the light board and don't forget to give the computer a good kick when it's not behaving.

As I bid my own farewell, I say good-bye to a life of laughter, learning, tears and challenges. In a matter of days, the whole cycle will begin again as I start a new edition of my life with a new staff. Farewell...

Meredith Herald

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Editorial Policy:

The *Meredith Herald* is published by the College throughout the academic year. The paper is funded by the College and through independent advertising. The opinions expressed in the editorial columns do not necessarily reflect those of the college administration, faculty, or student body.

If you have a article idea for the staff, contact the editor directly. All ideas will be considered for individual issues that best fit the article topic.

MEREDITH BY TORY HOKE



Campaigns are out of control

MICHELLE DRAKE
Business Manager

If a baseball player rounds third base and slides in at home, and before the umpire has a chance to call him safe or out, the player hands the umpire \$5,000, what do we call it? A bribe. If a lawyer arguing a case in front of the judge says, Your honor, may I see you in your chambers and the lawyer offers the judge \$1,000 and another \$10,000 from partners at the firm and tells the judge, "Don't let this influence your ruling on my client," what do we call it? A bribe. But somehow, everyday, special interest lobbyists approach elected officials who we all elect to sit in judgement on key issues. Those special interest lobbyists offer public servants money for their re-election campaigns, and we somehow have a different name for it - "campaign contributions."

In 1776, patriots fought hard for our democracy. They fought hard to create a system of fair representation. Every year we celebrate the Fourth of July to honor those who declared independence from a distant government that was not responsive to the people. But their vision, a government of the people, by the people, for the people, is being washed away by a sea of special interest money. It is now a government of by and for the wealthy special interests who

fund campaigns.

When we look at who contributes to campaigns, you begin to understand why citizens feel left out. Less than one percent of voters make up ninety percent of the political money. The largest categories of donors are lobbyists and special interest groups. How ironic is it that these special interest groups receive millions of dollars in tax cuts every year? They are the closest to the law-making process.

All too often, money determines who can run, who wins, and what issues the legislature addresses. Nine out of ten times, the candidate who spends the most wins. Winners outspend losers two-to-one, and only one-third of campaigns are actually contested races. I thought democracy was about choices, but how can you choose when no one is running? We are a society of good people caught in a bad system. When a citizen decides to run for office, why is the first question asked, "Where will you get the money for television ads?" Instead it should be, "Where do you stand on the important issues facing the state?"

The solution to big money in politics is the Clean Election Act, limiting campaign spending. Clean elections candidates must agree to fixed spending limits for the primary and gener-

al elections and not to accept contributions from private individuals and organizations. This will bring a halt to the rising costs of campaign elections, giving all qualified candidates an opportunity to run for office. These candidates must demonstrate a broad base of popular community support to qualify for public funding by gathering a set number of signatures and small qualifying contributions from average citizens in their districts. Candidates will then be accountable to voters and not to special interest groups giving large amounts of money. It will allow our elected officials to spend more time on the real issues and less time on fundraising for their re-election campaign. Wealthy special interest groups will no longer have an influence on North Carolina politics. The Clean Elections Act affirms the principle "one person, one vote."

Washington will never clean up its act until states like North Carolina, pass a meaningful reform. This ball and chain on our democratic process must be broken. We have to send a message to Congress to let them know we are tired of waiting, tired of being ignored and tired of being hidden behind the big bucks. It is up to everyone to stand up and break the silence. Let your voice be heard.

Letters to the Editor Policy:

Everyone in the Meredith community is invited to write a letter to the editor. All published letters must be typewritten with contact name, address, and telephone number. All letters must be signed by the author in order to be published.

The *Herald* reserves the right to place any other article submissions on file until needed or to choose not to print them. The *Herald* also has the right to edit submissions for space requirements.

Only 3.5 days
of classes to go!

Submissions for
the *Herald* are
due every
MONDAY at
1 p.m. in the
box outside of
208 Cate.