

Fire should be a wake-up

It's happened again. UNC-Chapel Hill, Seton Hall University-- and now Meredith is added to the list of schools who have been put in dangerous situations because of fires.

From the Editor

Fires have been the cause of many a concern on college campuses, and in recent months it has especially been in the news since the death of three Seton Hall students in a January blaze.

Here at Meredith, this fire should prompt an investigation into the policies that we live by in our residence halls. Students have questioned them all year; it is now time for college officials to question them as well.

While there is no official word on what caused Monday's fire, it seems that a carelessly disposed of cigarette is the most likely culprit for the trash-can fire.

This most likely scenario leads to several questions that deserve answering: Why is it OK to smoke in dormitories but not have unlit, never-been-lit candles in the rooms? It seems much more logical to either permit both or ban both. While a lit candle is certainly not safe, neither is a used match or a cigarette butt, and the most logical solution seems to be to ban both smoking in the dormitories and having candles in the dormitories.

With ashtrays located outside every dorm and the warm weather we've experienced lately, there are no excuses for inappropriate disposals of cigarettes. Indeed, even running water over the butt or the match prevents any reignition of the embers.

Thus, resident students should challenge the Office of Residence Life to develop consistent, fair policies. While new policies will not prevent the possibility of future fires, stricter regulations on smoking in the dormitories can create a safer, healthier living environment for all resident students.

In making stricter policies, Residence Life will not be excluding smokers or denying them rights; they will be including all residents in their considerations. Indeed, Residence Life would be denying rights to nonsmokers by insisting that smoking be permitted in residence halls.

While an occurrence like this should never have happened, if it causes an impetus for a change in the policies, then such a change may be the only good of the fire.

Campus forum

Thanks to campus for caring friends

Dear Editor:

I had originally planned to write a thank-you letter on behalf of Stacy Hudson's friends. However, since the fire in Heilman Monday morning, it seems as if a joint thank-you letter is due to some very special angels.

First of all, I would like to thank the individuals who helped us, Stacey's friends and acquaintances, get through the events of last week. Without the support given during the week, especially during the wake and the funeral, I am sure the angels involved would have barely made it through these events.

But the good news is that we did make it through with a little help from friends. These friends included: Sam Carothers, campus minister; Lea Metz, residence director; Dr. Jean Jackson, vice president for Student Development; Lori Ann Stretch, Counseling Center; Beth Meier, director of the Counseling Center; Ann Gleason, dean of students; and

all the other angels who helped us get throughout the days following Stacy's homecoming to heaven.

Second, I would like to thank all the angels who helped Heilman residents get through the fire early Monday morning. These angels included: President Maureen Hartford and her husband Jay; Dr. Jean Jackson; Dr. Murphy Osborne, vice president for Institutional Advancement; Mr. Charles Taylor, executive vice president; Dr. Allen Page, dean of Undergraduate Instruction; Ann Gleason; Sam Carothers; Charlene Gaines, director of Residence Life; Michelle Aheron, Lea Metz, Regina Mack, Sarah Isham and Ebony Williams, residence directors; Jeannie Morelock, director of Marketing and Communications; Brandi Orbin, assistant director of Marketing and Communications; the resident assistants of Heilman; Meredith's security and Campus Police; the residence hall fire marshals and especially the Raleigh fire fighters

However, as a resident of first Heilman, I would like to

extend a special thank you to a marvelous RA and caring friend, Krystal Tyndall. Krystal's leadership helped a lot of us make it through the chaotic morning. If I have overlooked anyone, I say thank you to you as well.

Sometimes individuals walk through life and take for granted the most important aspects of life. Since the events of the past week, I'll try not to let a day pass without living life to the fullest and giving thanks and praise where it is rightly due. I urge all who read this to do the same. Tell those you care for how much they mean to you every day. After all, we never know when the time will come for us to leave this world.

In closing, I would just like to leave these questions: Have we made a difference in a person's life? Do those people we love know how we feel about them? Life is too short for the answer of either of these questions to be no.

God Bless Always,
Jackie Lynn Schmidt

Opinion: Don't set beauty standards

JONI SMITH
Staff Writer

How many times do you look at yourself in the mirror and long to be just a couple of pounds lighter? Do you ever look at the cover of *Mademoiselle* and wonder how those super models look like that?

If you have you are not alone. One in three college women does not feel comfortable about her weight. The number of eating disorders in women age 15 to 23 is growing every year.

Why do we allow ourselves to be like this? Why can't we be happy with ourselves the way we are? Society makes women think that in order for

us to be considered beautiful and attractive, we must be a certain size. What happened to liking someone for who they are?

Maybe some of you received the forwarded e-mail about "beautiful women." This forward consisted of facts about women's weight and their ideas about what their ideal weight is. One of the facts stated that if Barbie were a real woman, she would have to walk on all fours due to her proportions. Another fact was that most of the pictures of models that adorn the cover of magazines are airbrushed once the film is developed.

So Cindy Crawford really

does have zits and Naomi Campbell might be a size seven rather than a size three.

For some women, there is not an hour that goes by that the thought of their weight does not cross their minds. I hope that society realizes what is happening to the women of our time and goes back to operating under the philosophy that "Looks aren't everything." It does not matter what other people think of you as long as you are happy with yourself.

If you do not love yourself for who you are, how can you ever expect anyone else to be able to love you?

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