



# MEREDITH HERALD

Volume XVII, Issue 17

Educating Women to Excel

January 31, 2001

## On the inside:

How do Meredith community members feel about our new President?

Page 2

Peace succumbs to Meredith's basketball power.

Page 5

Find out what the Entertainment & Sports Arena has to offer you.

Page 8

**Meredith Herald**  
at  
Meredith College  
3800 Hillsborough St.  
Raleigh, NC 27607  
(919) 760-2824  
FAX (919) 760-2869  
maxwell@meredith.edu

## Heilman fire raises safety issues

### Right to smoke in dorms questioned

LEESHA AUSTIN  
Layout Editor

To smoke or not to smoke in the dorms—that is the question. This issue has made its way into numerous conversations around campus following the recent fire on the third floor of Heilman Residence Hall.

So what is everyone saying?

According to Kamelah Nelson, residence director for Heilman and Barefoot Residence Halls, "most everyone I've heard from wants smoking in the dorms banned."

"A lot of people have come to me very upset," she added. "Someone asked me, 'Does someone have to die before we ban smoking?'"

Nelson stressed that she will "be there for residents" and will "back them up."

Junior Pat Newton, resident assistant on third Heilman, said that her residents had mixed reactions to the fire. She agreed with Nelson that many residents were upset by the fire and

feel that smoking should be banned; however, she added that some students believe that smoking should not be banned.

"My residents were split about 50/50 on whether or not smoking should be banned in the dorms. Most smokers seemed to want to be permitted to continue smoking, at least until this semester is over," said Newton.

She added that while she and everyone in her suite are smokers, they all believe that smoking should be banned in the dorms.

"I believe that the safety of a group of girls is more important than allowing smokers to smoke in their dorm rooms," said Newton.

Senior Hilary Allen lived on first Heilman last year and was displaced from her room for the last month of school as a result of last year's first floor fire, which started when an improperly extinguished cigarette ignited the contents of the laundry room trash can.

Allen said, "You'd think that Residence Life would have learned from last year's fire. Both fires could and should have been prevented."

"Allowing residents to

smoke in their dorm rooms endangers the lives of so many people. It's scary. It's really scary," she added.

Jenni Antinore, a third Heilman resident, says that she "understands where other people are coming from on the safety issue."

However, she is not certain that smoking in the dorms should necessarily be banned.

"I personally feel that it should not be banned since we have been allowed to smoke ever since our freshmen year," she explained.

Yet Antinore does believe that non-smokers should not have to live on them.

"I am a smoker, but if I didn't smoke, I would certainly not want to live on a smoking hall," she said.

She also said, "As a 20-year-old adult, I know how to be safe and responsible, and I would think most people would; however, after the last two fires I am beginning to question that."

Newton said that on the night of the fire, everyone on her hall automatically assumed that it was caused by a cigarette in the trash can.

After the investigation, the

captain of the Raleigh Fire Department reported that they are 99 percent sure that the fire was accidental and that it was caused by either a hot match or a cigarette.

Senior Sherry Stephens, a resident of first Heilman during last year's fire, believes that smoking in dorm rooms should be banned.

"I signed a petition calling for a ban of smoking in dorm rooms last semester, and I know a lot of smokers signed it as well," said Stephens.

Senior Heather Spell, Student Life chair, explained that this petition was circulated last semester and was turned into Heidi LeCount, director of Residence Life.

Stephens added that while she thinks the fires were likely caused by cigarettes, she thinks that Meredith should investigate the wiring in the buildings.

"These buildings are old, and I think it is suspicious that there have been so many fires in recent years. I think it is especially important to investi-

**Please see  
FIRE  
page two**

## Thomas describes joy of Spain, art

### Professor of Spanish speaks on Monday

LAURA LEE COLLINS  
Staff Writer

Professor of Spanish Dr. Mary Lorene Thomas told a crowd of faculty and students that Spain draws her presence "again and again" in Jones Auditorium Monday night. The Faculty Distinguished Lecture has occurred on campus once or twice a year since 1963.

Over the years, 38 faculty members have been awarded the chance to present their scholarly lectures.

Thomas, the newest member

of this esteemed group, gave her lecture entitled "Buen Retiro, Madrid: September 17, 1665."

The lecture began with a short introduction of Thomas by Dr. Brent Pitts, head of the department of foreign languages and literature. Pitts referred to Thomas as a "highly regarded member" of the faculty, and he briefly discussed her contributions to Meredith throughout her years here.

An obviously honored Thomas took the podium to deliver her lecture on the Baroque period in Spain. The Spanish palace Buen Retiro was the focus of her lecture, along with its contribution to

the art and drama of the Spanish Baroque period.

From reading the program the audience was already well informed of Thomas' love of Spain and its artistic community. She said, "My greatest intellectual pleasure has been derived from studying Spain's Golden Age drama in its many manifestations."

Thomas gave a detailed description of the palace and the art that it housed. The palace hosted two thousand or more paintings and also was the site of many dramatic performances called "comedias."

Thomas showed slides of the palace and paintings throughout her lecture.

Thomas stressed the impor-

tance of the weak economic status of Spain at the time of the Baroque period and pointed out that the art and drama during the time were thriving.

Buen Retiro was a representation of the Baroque period and its "original creativity."

Thomas concluded her lecture by stating that Buen Retiro was a special type of palace. It was, she noted, a "monument devoted to representative art" and "a palace of monarchical artistic delight."

Thomas has been a member of the Meredith faculty for 20 years and is currently serving as the Director of Faculty Development, as well as a foreign language professor.