

N.C. businesses: gold mine

The United States Congress is examining and re-examining a bill that would reform the way political campaigns are financed.

Current problems with campaign finance exist because some corporations and private donors give what is termed "soft money," which is raised and spent outside the regulatory structure for federal election campaigns.

From the Editor

But North Carolina corporations will not take campaign finance reform lying down. Indeed, Democracy South, a Carrboro-based campaign finance watchdog group, has found that from 1997 to 2000, soft-money donations to the Democratic and Republican parties from North Carolina corporations and private citizens reached \$8.4 million. Most of the money went to the Republican party, not surprising in a historically conservative state.

And, also not surprisingly, a good deal of the soft-money donations came from tobacco companies, power companies and banks, three of the state's major industries.

In fact, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco gave \$1.6 million, with 88 percent of that going to the Republican party.

First Union and Bank of America gave a combined \$1.6 million, and almost 90 percent of their donations went to the more conservative of the two parties.

Duke Energy and Carolina Power and Light (now known as Progress Energy) also gave their share of money to energize political campaigns. Together, the two power providers gave \$365,000, and 77 percent of that went to the Republican party.

But other not-so-expected companies also donated their share of soft money. The Research Triangle Park's pharmaceutical giant, GlaxoSmithKline, gave \$1.1 million, with 93 percent going to the Republican party.

Is there a trend here? It's to be expected that the tobacco companies would donate to the Republicans, who favor less stringent government control of tobacco. And the banks rely on many Republicans' desires to earn money as a sign of success. Now, it seems that drug companies are feeling that conservative slant as well, donating their money to the Republican party.

Maybe it's to be expected from a company that is currently trying to prevent affordable AIDS treatment from reaching South Africa. Let's hope not.

Campus forum

All author wants is a little respect as a Meredith student

Dear Editor:
You know what I love about this school?

I love that when I come home from a friend's house at 2 a.m., I have a smiling face to greet me at the gates of Meredith. I love that if I am tired or it is raining, I can ask, and one of our security officers will escort me to my dorm. I feel as safe walking across Meredith's campus at night as I would in my own back yard.

But there are some things about this school that bother me. I have issues with the way our rooms are searched, as well as the results of those searches.

When I arrived at school after a late-night movie, I was greeted a yellow slip alerting me that I was being fined \$15 for a halogen lamp, which really contained a 40-watt bulb. Adding to that, my things had been ransacked.

After talking with several other students, I learned that their living space had been similarly violated. I know that room searches are necessary, but when we signed a contract giving the college permission to search our rooms, we did not give permission for our belongings to be strewn about.

What is worse is that we cannot even watch this happen; instead, we must stand outside our rooms and wait while our privacy is violated. This is a borderline violation of our constitutional rights. If Meredith College is going to require us to live on campus for two years of our education, something must be said about this.

My next issue is why I "violated the Honor code." I think that the rules concerning empty alcohol bottles and shot glasses are a bit extreme. So when I purchased a Meredith College "toothpick holder" from the Student Supply Store, I thought nothing of it.

I bought it because it would look nice on my window sill and would show my pride for Meredith College.

The residence hall officials who searched my room also

confiscated the Crown Royal bags my friends had given me.

I had both of these things in plain sight because I did not consider a Meredith College toothpick holder and 20 Crown Royal bags to be contraband.

But now I join the distinguished ranks of Honor Code violators. And why? Because the bookstore sells alcohol-related paraphernalia. The bookstore is privately owned and operated, so they can sell these glasses, but if that is the case, then Meredith College should not brand them as alcohol related.

As for the bags, I think that calling them alcohol-related paraphernalia is extreme. If they are alcohol-related, then almost anything could be considered alcohol related.

The Absolut Vodka ads many of us have on our walls or just about any glass, cup or mug could, under different circumstances, be considered alcohol-related paraphernalia.

As students, we all have

busy lives. We have homework, jobs, boyfriends and sports, not to mention finding the time to eat, sleep and breathe. We do not have time to waste.

Nevertheless, because of these recent events, I have had to waste my time proving myself not to be an Honor Code violator.

I refuse to pay thousands of dollars a year so that this institution can point accusing fingers my way and force me to waste time clearing my name.

We are grown women living away from home and making our own decisions.

The more occurrences like this that happen, the less respect we will have for this institution. So try to treat us and our space with more respect so that we may all peacefully go about pursuing higher education.

Sincerely,
Mary Caudle, '04

Letters to the Editor Policy:

Everyone in the Meredith community is invited and encouraged to write a letter to the editor. All published letters must be typewritten with a contact name, address and telephone number, and 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 restrictions, grammar and style. Opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editorial staff.

Inclement Weather Policy

Decisions to change the College operating hours or to cancel classes due to adverse weather conditions are made by appropriate members of the Senior Management Team.

Once a decision has been made, the information is immediately updated on Meredith's inclement weather line, 760-2384.

Notice of cancellations and delays are also phoned in to WRAL-TV 5 (or check the WRAL website at <www.wral-tv.com/contents>) and to other local television and radio stations as time allows.

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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.

How to reach the Herald:

If you have an article idea for the staff, contact the office at 760-2824. You can also e-mail the paper at <maxwellll@meredith.edu>. All ideas will be considered but may not necessarily be used.