

# Meredith volunteers head to Ground Zero

**□ Students witness firsthand the gift of giving at Ground Zero.**

MOLLY HUFFSTETLER  
Staff Reporter

A six-member team of Meredith students, staff and an alumna headed to New York with 5,333 toys to give to the children of the Battery Park City area over the past week-end on behalf of a local non-profit.

Meredith students Meghan Griffith, Emily Parton and Grayson Gant as well as Meredith alumna Christy Sanderson and her mother—who works at Meredith in financial aid—Carol Sanderson traveled with Operaton Toy Box, a non-profit organization with the mission to “provide new and gently used toys to young people affected by disaster.”

All of the women who par-

ticipated in distributing the toys are either on the board of directors for Operation Toy Box or volunteers for the non-profit organization.

Over 200 children received toys. Each one was given 10 toys each.

The remainder of the 5,333 toys was given to the Red Cross operation centers in the area.

What the Red Cross does not directly distribute from that site will be taken by other disaster relief organizations and order distributed to other communities with children in need.

The volunteers spent the majority of their time at Battery Park City Day Nursery giving out toys to the children of Battery Park City community.

Not only was the nursery their donation center, but it also served as their home for their visit to New York.

This specific community is only one block away from the disaster area, Ground Zero.

Because their time was spent so closely to the actual disaster area, they did get to view the rubble and talk with some of the families who had first-hand accounts of the tragedy that took place on Sept. 11.

Speaking about her overall experience in New York, sophomore Meghan Griffith said, “It was horrible, humbling, overwhelming and at the same time the largest learning experience of my life.”

In correlation with her time giving out toys, Meghan also was able to take the *On Wings of Hope* stars from the campus initiative to raise disaster relief for families of the victims of the attacks and give them to rescue workers, police, firemen, and others in New York helping with the relief efforts.

Griffith says this opportunity has been the greatest highlight out of all of her volunteer experiences.

Sanderson, vice-president of Operation Toy Box and Meredith employee, said that the

humility of the New Yorkers was overwhelming.

“I have never met such humbling, heartwarming, appreciative people. It was like it (the terrorists acts of Sept. 11) just cracked their shell. We have a vision of hard-nosed New Yorkers. It’s not like that anymore. They have no choice but to accept all of the help. We do our part for the kids, others do other types of volunteer work,” she said.

One of Sanderson’s most memorable visions is of the continuous smoke over the disaster site. There is a steady smoldering fire, being fed as pieces of large debris are lifted from the rubble. She also recalls the feeling of being “so small” in such a huge place of disaster.

“I felt so tiny in that mass of destruction. It seemed like it was so unreal. To see those trying to get rubble out 24 hours a day with smoke surrounding the area. It was so powerful,” she said.

“This is an experience I was glad to be a part of. We were all honored to be able to be there and be a part of this recovery operation.”

Sanderson is willing to assist any campus organization willing to head-up a toy collection with information.

The women are planning to send more toys to the New York area, and there is a way for the Meredith community to become involved.

If this is something your organization would like to be in charge of you may contact Carol Sanderson in the financial aid office located on the 3rd floor of Johnson Hall or visit [www.operationtoybox.org](http://www.operationtoybox.org).

## Campus construction continues, Science and Mathematics building on time

**□ New building will use students’ designs and professors’ input. Construction is on schedule.**

REBECCA BARRINGER  
Staff Reporter

Construction on the new Science and Mathematics Building is underway and is scheduled for completion in December 2002.

The building will be 80,000 square-feet in size and will provide improved facilities for science, mathematics and computer science related courses.

“This new building will make a world of difference,” said biology teacher Dr. Larry Grimes. “It is modern in every sense of the word.”

The building will have an outdoor courtyard, a roof-top astronomy observatory and multiple specialized laboratories. The building will have also an increased number of computer labs.

“I am glad that there will expanded computer services,” said junior biology major Minoti Amin. “As a commuter student, I often rely on the school’s resources during the day. It would be helpful to have reliable computer access.”

Special community spaces have been designed in the building in order to encourage out of classroom learning and interaction between students and teachers. Math and computer science majors, for example, will have a gathering place complete with individual lockers and laptop Internet access.

“We all want to teach in an environment like that,” said math teacher Jo Guglielmi. “Right now, students gather in the hallways.”

The new building will give the departments more space, but more importantly, it will provide them with upgraded facilities. According to William Wade, vice president for Business and Finance, improvements to an existing building on campus would have been an inadequate solu-

tion.

“There was a definite need for upgrade in science facilities,” he said.

Grimes also thought the building was necessary. He said the three biology labs presently used in Hunter Hall are “dimly lit and overcrowded” and that the new building would “triple the available teaching labs and give larger, wonderfully equipped labs.”

Construction on the Science and Mathematics Building began in September and is running on schedule, said Rodgers Builders’ Superintendent Mort Robbins. The company is presently laying the foundation and beginning the sides of the basement walls.

The faculty and students have been heavily involved in the decision-making processes for the new building, Wade said.

Students, for example, are designing a geometric patterned tile for the building’s atrium floor design. Teachers have worked with architects and contractors with decisions about laboratory configura-

tions and set-ups.

“I think it was needed and that it is a good opportunity to improve the Math and Science Departments here at Meredith,” said senior Lanier Senter. “I think the building will generate interest for the school from prospective students, and the students with majors in these fields will have more opportunity and increased resources.”

“Personally, I am really looking forward to the new building,” said freshman Laura McNeill. “I am taking three math and science classes right now and will be able to appreciate it when it is ready.”

In order to make room for the new building, the Mae Grimmer Alumnae House was relocated and commuter parking beside the Cate Center was removed.

The Alumnae House was moved to a more prominent location adjacent to the Jones Chapel. The major stages of the relocation have been completed and the final steps have been scheduled, said Robbins. The house should be completed

by mid-November.

“It’s coming along and it looks good now,” Robbins said, “but give us another couple of weeks and it’ll look really good.”

Additional commuter parking was added to compensate for the loss of the lot in front of the Cate Center.

The new lot is located beside the existing commuter lot behind the Cate Center and will accommodate around 270 commuters, said Wade.

Delays in the lot’s completion caused parking problems for many commuters during the first weeks of school.

“I know parking was a problem for some people,” said junior Sara Phillips, “I have 8 o’clock classes every morning, though, so I didn’t really experience too many problems finding a space.”

Overall, the construction on the campus’ south side is running according to schedule.