

Opening convocation to focus on Summer Reading Program

2002-03 convocations to feature scientists

CHRISTY SADLER
Managing Editor

In celebration of the opening of the new science and mathematics building in January, several acclaimed scientists will be speaking at Meredith convocations this year.

On Monday at 10 a.m., Dr. Jerri Nielsen, author of *Icebound: A Doctor's Incredible Battle for Survival at the South Pole*, will speak at Meredith's opening convocation in Jones Auditorium. Nielsen

was a doctor stationed at a research base in Antarctica when she discovered a cancerous lump in her breast and was forced to treat herself. *Icebound* chronicles both her life and her experiences in Antarctica.

Icebound is this year's Summer Reading Program (SRP) book for incoming freshmen. This is the fourth year of the SRP, a program through which freshmen read a book during the summer before they come to Meredith and participate in book discussions and other activities once they come to campus.

"*Icebound* is a book

about many things: risk, adventure, escape, growth, friendship, fear, loneliness, vulnerability, bravery, community," said Rebecca Duncan, SRP co-chair.

Duncan believes that Nielsen's speech will help students better connect with Nielsen and her experiences. "It's always interesting to see and hear the person who wrote a book you have read," she said.

"I expect that she will do

**Continued
on page 8**

Meredith Votes

The latest news from Meredith's only course devoted to campaign issues and registering you to vote.

DR. CLYDE FRAZIER
Contributing Writer

Did you ever wonder why the government provides medical care for senior citizens but not for students? Does it seem a little strange that eighteen year olds can be tried as adults and drafted for military service, but they can't legally drink? These are complicated issues, but it surely looks like the political system doesn't much care about the needs of young people.

How can that be since the Constitution guarantees equal rights to everyone? The problem is that in politics, you don't count unless you vote, and young people are less likely to vote than almost any other group in the population. Fewer than a quarter of those between 18 and 24 are likely to vote in any given election. Retirees, in contrast, have one of the highest turnout rates of any population group - and cutting social security is considered political suicide.

Meredith is different, though. Meredith Votes. In the last election, over 70% of resident students at Meredith registered and almost all of those students voted. Why does Meredith stand out from the crowd in this way? In 2000, the Meredith campus was the site of the most intensive voter registration effort in the nation.

Once again this year, students taking Public Leadership: Practice and Theory (Pol 942) will organize a campus wide,

non partisan campaign to register students to vote, inform them about the issues and candidates that will be on the ballot and encourage them to turn out on election day. The campaign will be called Meredith Votes. In about a week, you'll see stacks of voter registration forms in central locations across campus, along with red, white and blue boxes. Deposit your completed form in one of the boxes and Meredith Votes will mail them in for you.

Over the course of the semester, other things will happen. Your teachers may pass out registration forms in class, and someone may come by your room or give you a call to remind you to register and vote. Watch this space. It will contain a series of articles which will inform you about registration procedures and remind you of deadlines, as well as educating you about the candidates who are running for office and the issues at stake in the election. Later in the semester, there will be an opportunity for you to actually meet the candidates and learn where they stand on the issues. If you need an absentee ballot or a ride to the polls on election day, we'll help you with that too.

**Continued
on page 8**

Turquoise jewelry in stock now for you!

**Charlotte's
Jewelry & Gifts**

2034 Cameron Street
Raleigh, NC 27607
(919) 821-9828

Also in Raleigh at
Triangle Town Center
(919) 792-2303

Present this ad for a 20% discount on one item.

Offer excludes special orders.