

News

Professor Suzanne Britt Returns to Meredith

Dr. Rebecca Duncan,
faculty advisor

For more than two decades, students in Suzanne Britt's writing courses at Meredith could be certain of two things. First, they would be held to very high standards, and second, they could expect a good amount of wit and plain old gut-busting humor every time they came to class. The wit and the humor were on display on Tuesday, April 15, when Britt, now retired, returned to campus to read some of her new poems and essays.

Britt's essay "Where Conversation Runs Deep as the Creek" set up a playful contrast between intellectual banter and the casual conversation over which Southerners bond. She writes, "Tall tales are popular, as are gossip, farm prices, family histories, ranting against the federal government, and physical ailments – the more grotesque, the better." The charm of simple folk, the warmth of family connections, and the physical beauty of the region are woven into a loving tribute. Noting that Southerners like most of all to talk about "nothing," she writes, "Anybody who walks across a flat, freshly plowed field in her bare feet learns pretty quickly what trivial conversation should feel like. It should go through the mind and heart and lips like

cool black sand through happy toes."

Several poems conveyed a more serious, pensive tone. In "Breathing the Shade," a young girl reads Jane Eyre while sitting in a tree to escape a harsh, punitive mother. "Here is the Dark Thing" contemplates the limits of imagination and language. It begins with a metaphor of caution, a grandmother telling a child to step carefully on the ground at night, where unseen obstacles could lurk. A new layer of perception comes from a teacher who asserts that "if you couldn't say it/You didn't know it." These incompatible notions then shape the life of the poem's speaker, who finds herself "under contract not to blunder" while living with the dark thing,

*And to watch your step
On moonless nights
When the way is dark,
The foot in midair,
And the others safe on the lighted porch.*

Introducing Britt, Dean Garry Walton mentioned that a Britt essays appears in one of the new Common Core exams. And so we can be certain that high school students will have a chance to be inspired by one of Meredith's own for years to come.



Picture Courtesy of Dr. Rebecca Duncan

News Briefs

Kelly Wallace, staff writer

South Korean Ferry Death toll Rises to 113

The death toll of the April 16 capsizing of a South Korean ferry has reached 113, BBC reports. The ferry Sewol was on its way to the southern tourist island of Jeju. Out of the 462 passengers aboard, 325 were students from Danwon High School in Ansan, who were on the way to Jeju for a four day field trip. Of the 462 passengers, 175 passengers and crew members were rescued. According to CBS News, South Korean President Park Geun-hy says the captain and some crew members of the sunken ferry committed "unforgivable murderous acts" in the disaster that left more than 300 people dead or missing. Families of the missing passengers have been staying in a gymnasium on Jindo Island, but many families have started camping out at the port to be closer to the search. The search is still on to find the remaining missing passengers.

Afghanistan Election

Winner of the 2014 election in Afghanistan will replace Hamid Karzai, the only president the country has known since 2001. According to MSN News, the latest numbers showed Abdullah with 44 percent of the vote tallied so far. Ahmadzai, a former finance minister and World Bank official, received 33.2 percent in the partial results. Zalmi Rasoul, another ex-foreign minister, had 10.4 percent. Both Abdullah and Ahmadzai have promised a fresh start with the West and have vowed to move ahead a security pact with the U.S. that Karzai has refused to sign. The pact would allow a small force of American soldiers to stay in the country to continue training Afghan army and police to fight the Taliban. The Taliban has been making attacks throughout the whole election. Final results aren't due until May 14.

Earth Days Beneath the Stars

Lucia Rynka-Estevez, layout editor

Angels for the Environment, a Meredith organization dedicated to its mission of education about environmental issues, hosted the "Earth Day beneath the Stars" this past Sunday in honor of Earth Day, an annual holiday celebrated on April 22 in which events are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection.

The festivities began in the evening on the rooftop of the Science and Math building. Activities included stargazing, edible crafts, and games, such as corn-hole and Twister. Refreshments were provided, and background music was heard throughout the night. Dr. William Schmidt, physics professor, provided telescopes for the attendees to enjoy a beautiful view of Jupiter as well as Mars. For the conclusion of the event, students had the opportunity to participate in a Planet Walk, where they got to see the planets and the distance between them to scale. Planet Walk was led by Dr. Matthew Stutz, meteorology professor. "It was a lovely way to end the long weekend, and Easter," commented Kami Robinson, freshman.

Imani William, Angels for the Envi-



via @baybenge on Instagram

ronment's publicist, says that "it's important for people in general to take the time to appreciate the natural world around us. Many times we are so caught up with our world of technology and deadlines that we forget to appreciate Mother Earth and the beauty of our surroundings."

Earth Day was first commemorated in 1970, and is now celebrated in more than 192 countries each year.

Recycle this Issue! Everyday is Earth Day.

The Meredith Herald staff would like to thank their faculty advisor, Dr. Duncan, for her dedicated service this year.