

Ring Dinner in the Cate Center Parking Lot

By Haleigh West, Reporter



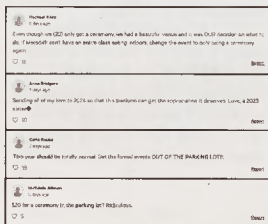
Photo by Kayla Dunn

On Sept. 19, it was announced that the Class of 2024 will be having their Ring Dinner Ceremony in the “Reimagined Cate Center Parking Lot.” Many members of the Class of 2024 have expressed their disappointment with this chosen location due to the fact that this tradition at Meredith is known for being a very fancy and special moment for the Junior class.

Since this announcement was made, a group of students has created a change.org petition and the Instagram account @ringdinnerpetition22. Created on Sept. 26, the petition has gained more than 1,000 signatures. The creators explained that they “feel strongly that the venue should have been the same or similar to how it was before the pandemic.” The petition asked that Student Leadership and Services (SLS) “take into account for the future classes as everyone’s voice should be heard equally.”

Current students, Meredith

alumni and parents have expressed their support. Comments on the petition range from support for the Class of 2024 to disappointment in how a well-established tradition has been handled. One user commented, “\$20 for a ceremony in the parking lot? Ridiculous.”



Comments left by signers of the Ring Dinner Petition on change.org

While the student(s) running the account wished to remain anonymous, *The Herald* reached out regarding the petition and the creation of the account. When asked what the inspiration was to start the petition, the account owners responded by saying “our main motivation was to be able to have our traditions return to normal as many of us got so many things taken away because of [COVID-19].” They continued on by saying, “This is the biggest [tradition] and we were very disappointed to see the venue when it’s supposed to be such a large and

fancy event.”

When asked what response they are hoping to get from those in charge of organizing Ring Dinner, they said, “the most ideal situation would be to have the venue changed back to something similar to the hotel, country club, event space, etc. that has been used in the past.” They also mentioned, “We understand that it may be too late to do so, but we don’t want this to happen to future classes as well.”

The Herald reached out to Cheryl Jenkins, Director of SLS, about students’ disappointment with the venue choice. When asked what the reasoning was for choosing the Cate Center parking lot, she said, “As we were looking ahead to plan large events for the fall semester we could not be sure that students would be able to eat together safely indoors because of COVID[19]; hence the decision to have the event outside on campus.”

She continued by saying, “Because the Spring Formal held on campus last year was well received, we began to look at a way to use that space again for both Ring Dinner and White Iris Ball.” She also stated that “sharing costs helps to keep the cost of attendance as low as possible, making it more accessible for more students. Hosting the event on

campus also removes a barrier of transportation for students living on campus who could not easily travel to an off-campus venue.”

Jenkins also referenced the petition that was created by saying, “While the petition makes clear that some students are unhappy with the plans, our office staff hopes that the reality of the event will be lovely and memorable—because the real meaning of Ring Dinner, rather than the location in which it is held, comes from celebrating with classmates.”

The Class of 2024 also received an email in response to the petition and students voicing concerns and disappointments about the upcoming event. The email stated, “The popularity of Ring Dinner means that we have outgrown many venues we have used in the past—Belk Dining Hall, a tent in the Courtyard, church fellowship halls and event spaces in various parts of Raleigh. [Reserving] a space large enough to accommodate Ring Dinner attendees usually requires a contractual commitment far in advance.”

While they acknowledge the students who have spoken out, the email finished by saying, “We hope you will have fun and enjoy the ever-evolving traditions of Ring Week.”

Club Profile: Angeles Latines

By Riley Heeb, Contributing Writer

Meredith College is a diverse community with many ways to learn about different cultures. Angeles Latines is a club that formed to focus on addressing the concerns of self-identified Latines and educating the campus about the Hispanic and Latine culture. *The Meredith Herald* reached out to co-presidents Lizbeth Burgos De Pena and Giselle Mejia-Santos to discuss more about Angeles Latines.

Angeles Latines was re-established as a student organization in the spring of 2022 and changed their name from “Angeles Latinas” to Angeles Latines on Oct. 3. When asked about the name change, their co-presidents commented that they “have decided to change the name ... in order to include all different identities.” Like many other clubs, Angeles Latines is growing to reflect the diversity in

and inclusiveness of their Meredith community.

When asked about what they are hoping to accomplish at Meredith College this year, Burgos De Pena and Mejia-Santos stated that their “main goal was to plan and execute [their] first Hispanic/Latine[e] event to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month.” The event, called La Parranda, will take place on Saturday, Oct. 15 from 12-3 p.m. in the Gazebo Area near the Chapel. Food vouchers will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. They plan to include performers, vendors and booths that are from different countries in this cultural festival.

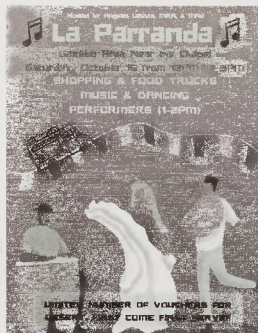
As a club, Angeles Latines not only hosts discussions, cultural events, lectures and recreational activities for the entire Meredith community, but during meetings they also have game nights, fun activities and cultural apprecia-

tion events. Since this semester has started, they have already had a game night, picnic and a movie night in which they viewed “La Misma Luna” (titled “Under The Same Moon” in English). In future meetings, they also hope to talk about specific independence days through member-created presentations.

Angeles Latines meets at 6:30 p.m. every Monday in Harris 214 and is always looking for more members including students who identify as Latine/Hispanic along with students who are interested in learning about and supporting the Latine culture and community.

To learn more about this club, make sure to follow @angeleslatinasmc on Instagram or email co-presidents Burgos De Pena at imburgosdepena@email.meredith.edu and Mejia-Santos at

gmejiasantos@email.meredith.edu.



Graphic courtesy of Angeles Latines