

Housing Guide

A PUBLICATION OF THE DAILY TAR HEEL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2011



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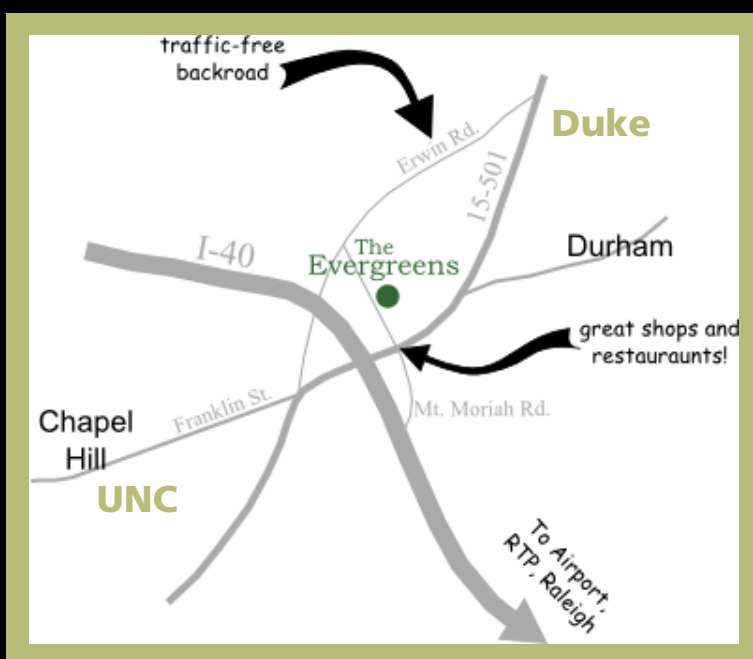
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DTH HOUSING FAIR.....PAGE 3

BUYING FURNITUREPAGE 5

UNC COMMUNITIES.....PAGE 6

HOUSING JOBSPAGE 7

LEGAL ADVICEPAGE 8

ON-CAMPUS CHOICES.....PAGE 9

PARKING PROBLEMS.....PAGE 10

YOUR FIRST APARTMENT.....PAGE 11

GREEN EFFORTS.....PAGE 12

STAYING SAFE.....PAGE 13

FOOD DEBATE.....PAGE 14

RENTERS INSURANCE.....PAGE 15

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Free advice, contests at DTH fair

BY BRYCE BUTNER
STAFF WRITER

Looking for a place to live? The Daily Tar Heel Housing Fair is a good place to start. With over 30 different participants, the event promises lots of valuable information about on- and off-campus housing. And if all else fails, there are lots of free giveaways too.

The fair will take place in the Great Hall of the Student Union from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on February 2, 2011.

Among the participants are major off-campus apartment complexes such as the Verge, Chapel Ridge and Stratford Hills Apartments. They will set up booths to offer information about prices, amenities and attractions.

Leah Norris of the Verge said that the fair is a great way for off-campus locations to maintain a presence among younger students. In fact, Norris said that the Verge is returning because of the positive reception in past years.

"It's definitely more of a one-on-one interaction. It's easier for someone to come up to us," Norris said. "It's great to be able to speak to them at the housing fair where they have time to ask their questions."

Freshman Brian Morrow agreed with her approach.

"The housing fair seems like a great idea. I've looked online for various apartments, but I feel like a fair sort of consolidates the information into an easier-to-digest environment. Truth be told, a lot of housing info on the Internet is difficult to find," Morrow said.

Morrow explained that he would attend the fair because of the ease of finding information.

"I already have ideas about where I want to live, but nothing is concrete so this will be helpful in solidifying any decisions," he said.

Senior Karla Capacetti said that the fair is perfect for students like Morrow.

"I think for underclassmen it would be a good idea, especially those who are transitioning to off-campus, because it will motivate them to search around for the best housing," she said.

Jill Powell, Department of Housing and Residential Education marketing manager, explained UNC Housing's involvement.

"Our interest in having students come to our table is to help answer

any questions about the somewhat complicated housing selection process 2011-2012," Powell said.

"We are committed to making sure everyone understands the process, because we know if students understand their options, they are more likely to end up with a housing assignment they are satisfied with," she explained.

For students who need an extra incentive to attend, senior Zach Martin agreed that free giveaways would likely draw more students to the fair.

"Give out free shirts or something. Maybe have free food. People are always looking for free stuff," Martin said.

With sentiment like Martin's in mind, Norris said that the Verge plans on distributing flyers and handouts as well as holding a contest to generate interest.

"We'll set up a table and have free items as well as pamphlets and full color brochures. Sometimes we'll run a contest," Norris said. "Usually it's a raffle, like a scratch-off lottery ticket for a gift card."

UNC Housing is also holding a contest. The Cribz contest calls on all students to submit photos of their rooms, either on- or off-campus. The best rooms receive either the first pick in the UNC housing lottery or \$150 in groceries from Whole Foods.

"We can show students what other buildings look like that they may have never been able to go inside before," Powell said. "Both new students to UNC and current students really enjoy getting a visual of what a room looks like versus trying to guess by looking at a 2-D floor plan."

"We can have a quick chat with a student and help them understand how to maneuver the housing selection process to their advantage," Powell said. "They leave feeling confident about the process and excited about all the options available to them for staying on campus another year while still meeting their changing needs."

Older students doubt the effectiveness of the fair.

"It seems like looking on the Internet would be a more suitable way of searching for housing," Martin said.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.



DTH FILE/ERIN HULL
Students check out a booth at last year's Daily Tar Heel Housing Fair. This year's fair will begin at 10 a.m. on February 2 in the Great Hall.

A preview of the Housing Fair participants

Ashbrook Apts.

Autumn Woods

Bell Properties

Berkshire Manor West

Bridges at Chapel Hill

Camden Governor's Village

Chapel Ridge Apts.

Chapel View Apts.

Cool Blue Rentals

Cort Furniture-Raleigh

Dean of Students Office

Dunlap Lilley Properties

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Notting Hill Apts.

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Sagebrook Apts.

Shadowood Apts.

South Terrace

Southern Village Apts.

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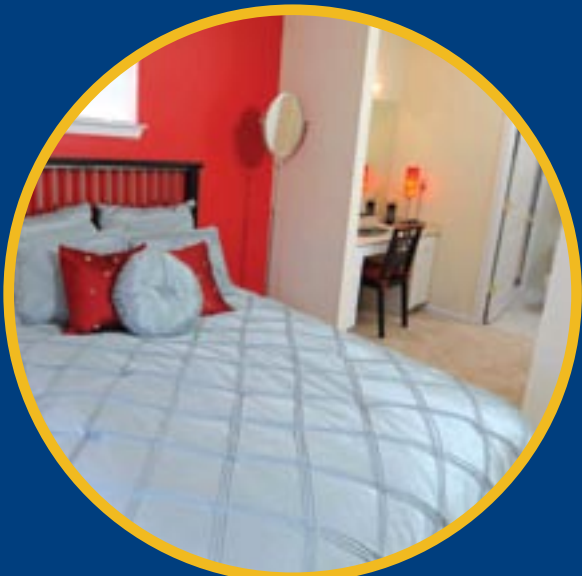


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Local shops, programs offer cheap choices

Finding apartment furniture is easy

BY CAROLYN MILLER
STAFF WRITER

If you need items to furnish or decorate your apartment, look no further than local businesses across the Chapel Hill and Carrboro area. They carry one-of-a-kind used items and basic amenities for any apartment.

Most students tend to stay on a budget when looking for apartment furniture. Cassie Ball went shopping for her space with money in mind.

"It's important because I'm working out a budget for college and all of this is coming out of the same fund," Ball said.

Although cheap is convenient, free is better. The nearby Orange County Solid Waste Management Department's Salvage Sheds are a great local resource for random knickknacks to fill an apartment. The sites can be found on Eubanks Road and Ferguson Road in Chapel Hill.

Muriel Williman, education outreach coordinator, encouraged those pinching pennies or gambling for the best deal to check out a Salvage Shed site.

Williman stated that one can find a range from antiques to

houseware items. For those wishing to support an environmental effort, Williman noted the advantage of the reuse community.

"It keeps useful items still in circulation rather than putting them in a hole in the ground where it's not going to serve anybody," Williman said.

Before students visit a site, Williman offers a few words of caution.

"It's really catch-as-catch-can," she said.

Another option for bargain shopping can be found on campus. Tar Heel Treasure, a two-year-old program, holds an annual sale on the Saturday after commencement.

The program's goal is to offer donated items at a discounted price. It promotes recycling while supplying affordable amenities for students. In turn, the program prevents items from reaching landfills.

Larry Hicks, director of Housing and Residential Education, described the items a student can find at the springtime event.

"We get hundreds of items ranging from carpets to refrigerators to toys to microwave ovens and book-

"It's important because I'm working out a budget for college and all of this is coming out of the same fund."

CASSIE BALL, JUNIOR

cases. Anything you can find in the resident hall you can find at Tar Heel Treasure," Hicks said.

For those who are looking for necessary kitchen items, the program is an affordable resource.

"We've sold refrigerators for ten to fifteen bucks," he said.

Tar Heel Treasure gives any proceeds back to the school and community. The first year the program benefitted the Eve Carson Scholarship Fund and the UNC Children's Hospital. Last year's funds, which amounted to ten thousand dollars, went to Habitat for Humanity's Build a Block program.

"It's just a good place to find some items to help furnish your apartment," Hicks said.

If UNC students are feeling adventurous, they can wander over to Carrboro and explore the PTA Thrift Shop.

Barbara Jessie-Black, executive director of the shop, noted a broad range of items including linens, decorative collectibles, dressers,

coffee tables, sofas, dinette sets and small appliances.

The shop hosts an art gallery that includes prints, paintings, frames and posters. Students can purchase original art, pottery and track lighting.

Jessie-Black summed up the customer experience.

"Typically we have cool and interesting stuff," she said.

For students who are not looking for unique items, the thrift shop also carries practical items.

"We have customers that shop with us on a regular basis who say, 'I furnished my entire living room with things I got here at the thrift shop,'" Jessie-Black said.

PTA Thrift Shop is a nonprofit that supports Chapel Hill-Carrboro city schools. By shopping, UNC students can give back to the community.

"When you shop with us you get a good value for your money."

Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.



DTH/KATIE BARNES

Many students turn to PTA Thrift Shop in Carrboro when shopping for furniture for their houses or apartments. Proceeds benefit local schools.

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Campus communities enhance education

Friends, service add to experience

BY JACQUELINE KANTOR
STAFF WRITER

There's nothing like shared bathrooms, broken elevators and floor activities to bring a group of people together. For the 560 students in the living-learning communities this year, they enter their dorms knowing they will have more in common with their neighbors than a UNC education.

The 12 living-learning communities on campus range from The Language Houses to Men at Carolina. Each community shares a philosophy based on the three "C's"—the common goal of students to build connection, commitment

and citizenship.

Students are encouraged to immerse themselves in educational seminars, service projects and social relationships relating to an area of interest, whether it is sustainability, substance-free housing or UNITAS.

"We give students an opportunity to explore a passion outside of their major," said Annice Fisher, coordinator for learning and leadership for Housing and Residential Education. "It doesn't matter what you came to study."

Fisher said living-learning communities are meant to be a gateway for students to get involved on campus. The communities typically include a weekly or biweekly seminar on the topic of the community, along with social activities and service.

"This looked like a really good way to meet people and get immersed, connect and have a good time."

ARIELLE SANTIAGO, SOPHOMORE

To apply to a community, simply submit a UNC Housing application and answer three specific questions. Special emphasis is put on creating a group with different backgrounds and beliefs.

Students join living-learning communities for a variety of reasons, Fisher said. Many in the Spanish and Chinese houses are often seeking fluency in the language. For those interested in the study abroad programs, language houses provide an immersion program right on campus.

In the R.E.L.I.C. community, students from a variety of religious backgrounds gather to learn more about other perspectives. The communities are designed to bring a diverse group of students together.

"We're not saying we're the experts in sustainability, but we'll bring a level of knowledge and you bring a level of knowledge," Fisher said.

Sophomore Arielle Santiago chose to enter The Carolina Experience community as a freshman, in hopes that a living-learning community would help with the transition to college.

"The idea behind it is to give incoming first-years a well-rounded immersion into UNC lifestyle. They try to get you involved in different cultural and academic experiences," Santiago said. "As an out-of-state student who didn't know anyone coming in, this looked like a really good way to meet people and get immersed, connect and have a good time."

Living-learning communities also encourage more interaction among people in the given community.

"It was a really good way to get to know people on my hall," said sophomore Kate Gooden, who also lived in The Carolina Experience community last year.

Students in a living-learning community are expected to focus on intentional learning outcomes. They look for ways they can enrich the campus community through civic engagement, seminars and other projects.

UNC is working on a thirteenth living-learning community to bring junior transfer students together in a section of Ram's Village. The goal of the newest community is to help with the junior transfer retention rate at UNC, Fisher said.

"It will give us the opportunity to get them together and connect with them."

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

Themed housing on campus

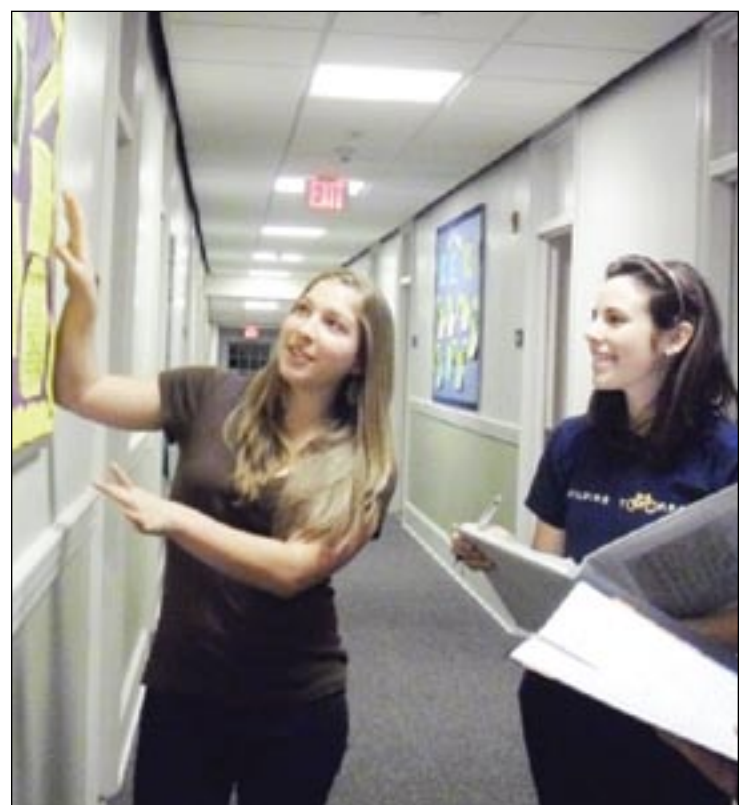
Themed housing is an option available for all undergraduate students who want a heightened on-campus living experience. The Department of Housing and Residential Education offers 11 distinct housing themes in 13 different dorm buildings on all parts of campus.



SOURCE: DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

1. **SYNC- Sophomore Year Navigating Carolina** - Hardin Residence Hall
2. **R.E.L.I.C.- Religion as Explorative Learning Integrated in our Community** - Grimes Residence Hall, 2nd and 3rd floors
3. **The Language Houses** - Chinese (Teague Residence Hall) and Spanish (Craigie North Residence Hall)
4. **The Carolina Experience (TCE)** - Koury Residence Hall, 1st floor
5. **Men at Carolina (M@C)** - Stacy Residence Hall
6. **W.E.L.L.- Women Experiencing Learning and Leadership** - McIver Residence Hall, 3rd floor
7. **The Connected Learning Program (CLP)** - Cobb Residence Hall
8. **Service and Leadership (S&L)** - Ehringhaus Residence Hall, 2nd floor
9. **Substance Free (SFLC)** - Joyner and Alexander residence halls
10. **Sustainability** - Morrison Residence Hall, 3rd floor (basketball side)
11. **UNITAS** - Carmichael Residence Hall, 2nd floor

DTH/KRISTEN LONG, AMANDA PURSER AND NATASHA SMITH



DTH/ALLYSON BATCHELOR

Natassia Rodriguez, a Residential Advisor, talks to Alexandra Lucas and other residents in the W.E.L.L. community of McIver Residence Hall.

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Jobs offer important experience, skill sets

BY KARI JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

As the end of the school year gets closer, students are beginning to consider where they will live in the fall. This is only slightly more important than choosing where you will work. For some students, this could be the same place.

"The experiences these students get while working in housing are one of a kind," said Alaina Barth, the coordinator for staff recruitment and development for the Department of Housing and Residential Education.

During the academic year, University housing has four positions opened to students. These include resident advisor, office assistant, resident advisor mentor and community manager.

To be an RA or an office assistant, you must have a grade point average of 2.5. If your GPA is at least 2.7 and you have been an RA or office assistant for at least a year, you can apply for one of the elevated positions: community manager or RA mentor.

Many students apply for the chance to be an RA. Besides the GPA requirement, students must have two recommendations, one of which is written by a previous housing staff member. They must also provide quality answers to several essay prompts. Barth said that 500 students applied for the position this year.

"That's the most we've ever had," Barth said.

Of the new applicants, 115 will be selected after the weekend screening and interview process. These lucky students will make up half of the total number of RAs on campus for the upcoming fall semester.

"RAs really set the tone for the year," said Josh Alexander, Morrison Community Director. "They are there to help if there's a problem."

Barth and Alexander both listed conflict mediation, time management, crisis management and collaboration as skills the RAs may find useful. They can build these through previous experiences and personal interaction with the students on their floor.

"The position's really what you make of it," Alexander explained.

Once you have completed a year as an RA, you become eligible to hold the RA mentor position. RA mentors live in the community to

provide additional leadership to the RAs and assist them in event planning and execution.

If living on a dorm is not for you, try applying for an office assistant position. Students who work in the housing community offices do not have to be residents but simply UNC students.

According to Alexander, office assistants are there to provide a customer service environment. "I think our office assistants are really the face of the community," he said. He explained that they provide instant response when an RA may not be available.

Molly Emmett, an office assistant in the Morrison Community, describes some of her duties as entering data in a computer, administrative organization and making residents' days a little smoother.

If you have already held one of these posts, you can apply to be a community manager. They primarily supervise office assistants, run the office desk and handle receipt management. Since the RAs must work a few times a week, community managers must manage and coordinate these shifts. There are several RAs and office assistants within each community who divide up the work.

Jobs in housing are slightly different over the summer.

In the summer of 2010, there were two positions available. Summer assistants covered the duties of a normal office assistant but also checked rooms for the UNC summer camps. Community assistants, which Barth called the catchall position, provide everything from linens to staffing plans. These jobs are advertised in March and hired by early April in preparation for the summer sessions.

"The benefits are ongoing. I don't think the benefits end after the position ends," Barth said of the RA job. She says employers will recognize the skill and training that goes into becoming an RA on their resumes. Besides these skills, Alexander says RAs have the opportunity to attend workshops to help them with their resumes and interview skills.

"I made a lot of friends and I've really enjoyed it," Emmett said.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.



Hinton James Community Director Morgan Murray (left) looks over notes with Resident Advisor Gregory Downing as other RAs work.

Summer Housing

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Interested in a UNC Housing job? Check this list to see if you qualify.

To be a Resident Advisor:

- Be a full-time UNC student
- 2.5 GPA or higher
- Live on campus for a year
- Skills in time management, conflict resolution, crisis solving

To be an Office Assistant:

- Be a full-time UNC student
- 2.5 GPA or higher
- Customer service skills and administrative experience

To be a RA Mentor:

- Must be a former UNC RA
- 2.7 GPA or higher
- Demonstrate leadership and excel as an RA
- Must live in the community where they choose to work

To be a Community Manager:

- Must be a former RA or OA
- 2.7 GPA or higher
- Demonstrate leadership and office administration skills
- Must live in the community where they choose to work

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SLS on leases, students' rights

Fix off-campus issues promptly

BY KEREN GOLDSHLAGER
STAFF WRITER

A leaky faucet has been neglected for months. A security deposit was paid but never returned. A sub-leasing agreement fell apart and requires litigation.

All of these and more are problems that Student Legal Services deals with on a regular basis.

Dorothy Bernholz, Legal Services attorney, said that property repairs, security deposits and zoning laws are the most frequently addressed issues.

"The zoning laws in Chapel Hill do not permit more than four unrelated individuals to be in a house, even though the landlords are letting seven people move in," said Bernholz.

"The town of Chapel Hill is enforcing that ordinance and just last week there was an order in which some students had to move out."

This zoning law was created because families and adults who live in close proximity to UNC students recently began complaining about trash in yards, noise violations and unsightly parking, Bernholz said.

When dealing with repairs, Bernholz emphasized the importance of submitting a written request.

"You need to give written notice to the landlord about the need for repairs so you can prove later that you told them that the water was leaking or that you didn't have heat," she said.

Security deposits — precautionary fees paid to the landlord at the beginning of a lease — can also prove problematic.

"This is your money, and the landlord has to give it back to you at the end of the lease, absent normal wear and tear," Bernholz said.

Debates often arise when tenants and landlords disagree over the definition of normal wear and tear, she said. In these cases, Legal Services can represent students in court.

To avoid the issue altogether,

Bernholz advised all students to perform a move-in inspection and have it initiated by the landlord. That way, there will be no ambiguity regarding damages that existed before move-in.

Another common housing issue is sub-leasing agreements. Many students who go abroad find other students to sub-lease their rooms in their absence.

"What happens is — even though you've gone to Madrid — you are still obligated under the lease, so you are still responsible for the person you are putting in there. So if they default on the rent, you still owe it to the landlord," Bernholz warned.

Junior Emily Hopper experienced the consequences that can result from failing to sign a sub-lease agreement.

When she decided to stay abroad for an extra semester — and then changed her mind and returned to UNC — she was left responsible for two different rooms after a verbal sub-lease agreement between herself and a friend fell through.

Hopper's parents ended up having to pay for one-third of the lease for a room she was not even living in.

"Make sure you sign sub-leases because people will not always follow through just on verbal agreements or moral obligations," Hopper said.

Bernholz urged students to come to Legal Services — which is free for all full-time UNC students who are up-to-date on their tuition payments — if they have any other questions about their leases.

Legal Services can only assist students who live in off-campus housing, so students with on-campus housing issues should talk to an RA or direct their problems to the housing department.

These students should keep in mind that UNC has a responsibility to provide safe and decent housing, just as any landlord would.

"The state law has ruled that the University is a landlord just like anyone else and is bound by the same standards," Bernholz said.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

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THE VERGE

On-campus housing attracts upperclassmen

BY HOLLY BEILIN
STAFF WRITER

On-campus housing is an increasingly attractive option for upperclassmen. In the last four years, many more undergraduates have requested to live on campus.

Rick Bradley, assistant director of the Department of Housing and Residential Education, attributes much of the increased demand to the new apartment-style units of Ram and Odum villages.

Ram Village has 920 private bedrooms organized around a living room area and kitchen.

Odum Village has a similar layout, although Bradley said the apartments are slightly bigger. Ram was built in 2006, 40 years after Odum.

"The reason we built Ram Village and converted Odum from student family housing to apartments was to attract and meet the needs of upper-classmen students," Bradley said.

"It had the impact we expected: when looking at peer institutions, we have more upperclassmen on campus and that number has increased significantly and continues to increase since the early 2000's, when we started the renovations. There has definitely been

an increase in demand."

Bradley said that in 2006, 7721 undergraduates lived on campus. In 2010 that number was 8562, an increase of more than 10 percent.

Since Ram and Odum villages' conversion, Baity Hill Apartments provide student family housing. Each of Baity's 400 units includes two bedrooms, a living room and a newly renovated kitchen. Most of the residents are graduate students, but Bradley said a few undergraduates who have families also make Baity their home.

The housing department will continue making renovations on existing buildings this summer. Two-thirds of the residence halls have gone through renovations since the early 2000's.

Bradley said Craige and Ehringhaus Residence Halls will be getting brand-new sprinkler systems. Ehringhaus will no longer be the only residence hall on campus without air conditioning.

Buildings are not the only things changing this year. The housing sign-up process will continue evolving.

"It seems like we're always doing something different," Bradley said. "The [sign-up] process is being tweaked to streamline it and make

"It had the impact we expected ... that number has increased significantly and continues ... since the early 2000s."

RICK BRADLEY, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION

it more efficient. This year we have the ability to pull people in with fewer pages and fewer forms, to make it a leaner process."

Freshman Amberly Nardo currently lives in Hinton James Residence Hall. She said the sign-up process could definitely be made easier.

"One of the hardest parts, especially as a freshman, was having to list my preferences for which community I wanted to live in," Nardo said.

"The housing website didn't really have pictures of rooms so, without taking location into account, picking where I wanted to live was pretty much a shot in the dark."

Bradley said that, in addition to almost all first-year students, 70 percent of sophomores, 35 percent of juniors and 18 to 20 percent of seniors also make their home in a residence hall or apartment-style communities.

Granville Towers is now within the UNC on-campus community. It was purchased by the UNC-Chapel Hill Foundation in the summer of 2009. The Foundation is a privately owned company within the University; it handles investments to bring in money to UNC.

Since it is still owned by a private company, Erin Angel, director of sales and marketing for Granville Towers, said that the applications are separate from on-campus housing applications.

"The housing department came in to run our resident life program," Angel said. "So they hire our RAs- they are employed through the University- and they run programs for our residents."

"We're definitely partners with the University, but we are still private housing," Angel said.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

On-campus housing options

There are 32 residence halls on campus. All North Campus residence halls are hall-style, while all Middle and South Campus residence halls are suite-style. Students can also live at Granville Towers, a residence hall owned by UNC but not part of UNC Housing.

RESIDENCE HALLS			A/C	GENDER
NORTH	OLD WEST	LEWIS	All central air, except for Joyner, which has window units	Coed except: All female: Aycock, Kenan and Manly All male: Graham, Mangum and Stang
	OLD EAST	EVERETT		
	MCIVER	GRIMES		
	SPENCER	MANLY		
	ALDERMAN	MANGUM		
	KENAN	ALEXANDER		
	AYCOCK	JOYNER		
	RUFFIN	CONNOR		
	GRAHAM	WINSTON		
	STACY	COBB		
MIDDLE	AVERY		Window units except for Carmichael, which has central air.	Coed, except for Parker, which is all female
	CARMICHAEL			
SOUTH	PARKER	TEAGUE	Window units in Craige, Ehringhaus and Hinton James; others have central air. Ehringhaus also has rooms with no A/C.	Coed
	CRAIGE	HORTON		
	CRAIGE NORTH	KOURY		
	EHRINGHAUS	MORRISON		
	HARDIN			
	HINTON JAMES			

SOURCE: DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS, AS OF FEBRUARY 2010

DTH/NATASHA SMITH

Green Car Tax Jump Starts Earth Month

City of Philadelphia Selects Zipcar to Provide Car-Sharing Services

Philadelphia, Pa. (June 11, 2008) — Zipcar, the world's largest car-sharing company, today announced it won the bid from the City of Philadelphia to provide car-sharing for City workers. This relationship signifies the city's commitment to sharing its fleet of cars with its employees and the public.

Zipcar offers many benefits to its members, including the ability to reserve cars online and use them for personal and business travel. The city's fleet of cars includes a variety of models, including sedans, SUVs, and vans.

Zipcar's service to the City will begin on July 1, 2008 and continue through March 31, 2009 and will be renewed for three additional years. Over the course of the contract, city employees will have access to Zipcar's diverse fleet of cars.

Members revealed they believe the service is worth the cost. If more people agree to use the service, the city could save money.

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama

In the "Zipcar Presidential Poll," which is held today at noon, Zipcar, the world's largest car-sharing company, announced the winning poll of its members as a way to answer the question: "Should the president have a Zipcar?"

Obama won the poll with 55% of the vote. Other candidates included Clinton (16%), McCain (10%), and others.

Obama's victory was a surprise, as many expected Clinton to win. The results were announced by telephone, and Obama was the first to be announced.

Obama's victory was a surprise, as many expected Clinton to win. The results were announced by telephone, and Obama was the first to be announced.



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Buses, bikes help ease parking problems

BY LENZIE PURCELL
STAFF WRITER

Transportation is a definite concern for UNC students. Whether searching for a parking spot or trying to figure out the bus schedule, many long for a simple solution.

Roughly 3,900 of 14,000 permits are assigned to students, according

to the UNC Student Government. Randy Young, information specialist for the UNC Department of Public Safety, added that freshmen usually are not allocated any of these spots. Exceptions are made only for those who are married, have hardships or are military veterans.

"There are always parking spots available for students who are eligible, whether that is in the PR lot or the S11 lot," Young said. "Students may not always get the spots they want, but there are definitely spots there because we are certainly not at full capacity."

Money collected from University parking goes to the Department of Public Safety's budget.

"There is a 300-employee payroll we have to pay. For every parking space you see, there is personnel that have to take care of it, there is maintenance and the creation of space," Young explained.

There are many who have given up on receiving an on-campus parking permit.

Freshman Kate Matthews parks at a graduate student's house on Purefoy Road. "It costs about \$300 a year, but I do have to ride my bike to get to my car," she said.

"I feel really fortunate to have a parking spot. I know that there are tons of other freshmen who wish they had their cars on campus."

Matthews found her parking

"The bus system is quite reliable, and most of my friends have a car ... I don't really need one."

MACKENZIE THOMAS, SOPHOMORE

space from a Craigslist ad posting. Freshman Amy York found her Rosemary Street spot in a similar way. Initially, she did not have a car at school. After several trips home, her parents decided it would be more economically beneficial to find a parking space.

"I visited many spots off campus to see locations and compare prices," York said. "I chose my spot because the area is well-lit, which is important when I am coming back late."

There are incentives for students who choose to make use of public transit or bikes.

"There are 50 to 60 different merchants that provide discounts



or free gifts for these students," Young said.

Comparatively, public transit is a more economical option. A parking permit for the year may range anywhere from \$239 to \$415.

"The bus system is quite reliable, and most of my friends have a car. So I don't really need one," reasoned Mackenzie Thomas, a sophomore who chose not to bring her car to Chapel Hill.

Dr. Katie Rose Guest Pryal, a law professor, has taken the Robertson Express Bus to campus since she started her career at UNC in 2007.

Pryal said that the 25-minute ride was timely and relaxing.

"It's a very peaceful time for me during my day because driving 15-501 is stressful."

"In principle, I believe we need more public transit between the major regions in our area. Chapel Hill has a fantastic local bus system. More transport between Chapel Hill and Durham, Raleigh, RTP and other regions would be wonderful," Pryal said.

Bikers are popular on campus and rightfully so. A walk from South Campus to Franklin Street can become quite an ordeal.

"With God's will, I will have a car next year, but without my bike this year, I would never make it to my job on time," freshman Erica Edelstein said.

Mary Sisson rides her bike every day from her Chapel Hill home. Instead of taking 15 minutes to get to class, she can make it in four.

When asked about her etiquette



DTH/CARTER MCCALL

There are incentives for students who choose public transportation or bikes such as discounts and free gifts from local merchants.

toward pedestrians, Sisson admitted she is not the friendliest biker.

"I am most definitely not a nice biker. I take advantage of the fact that I can bike faster than those people who are walking."

"There is really no bus for me to take to get to campus," explained Sisson. She also lives too close to campus to be eligible for a parking permit.

"My bike comes in handy when I'm crunched for time," Sisson said.

Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.

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Your first apartment search made simple

Tips, questions to ask before signing

BY IAN AGER

STAFF WRITER

It is a story we have all heard before: sophomores come back to school, fatigued from a break filled with family drama, only to face a cramped dorm room.

Off-campus housing has always been attractive for older students. However, when it comes time to find a new place, many do not know where to begin.

There are many ways to find available apartments. Most landlords have a website listing available properties, often with photos and maps of the location. There are also conventional ads which renters place in local newspapers. Regardless of these options, students often find their apartments just by talking to their friends.

“Word of mouth is really helpful in finding a good place to live,” said Gina Turner, property manager at Townhouse Apartments on Hillsborough Road.

“We don’t advertise a lot, and so it’s mostly word of mouth that brings people to us.”

Once you create a list of places to check out, you will need to get in touch with a realtor or property manager to schedule a viewing.

“I’m often out doing showings for prospective tenants, so I’m not always going to be in my office to answer the phone,” said Angela Huffman, associate property manager at Mill House Properties.

“E-mail is the best way to contact me.”

When viewing an apartment for the first time, do your homework.

“I think the best thing to do is to come prepared. Have a list of questions. If the person showing you the property can answer your questions quickly and efficiently, that’s a good sign,” Huffman said.

Don’t forget the basic questions—the terms of the lease, the rent rate, and so on.

“Ask if they require a cosigner for student leases,” Turner said. Building owners often require cosigners for student leases because students often lack the established credit history of an older tenant.

Students should be aware that the realtor is not the only person who can answer their questions. Often times, it is best to go straight

to the source.

If you want to know how much utilities cost, you can talk to the power company. All you need is the address of the property. Duke Energy can give you the numbers for how much electricity the property used last year.

“A lot of people ask about crime, and I always refer them to the police department,” Turner said. “It’s better to get facts rather than an opinion when it comes to crime and safety.”

Keep in mind that you cannot guarantee nothing will go wrong later just from looking at an apartment. Find out what kind of maintenance plan the building has, be it directly through the owner or a maintenance company.

“It’s inevitable that something will happen, and you need to make sure you know what the procedure is for maintenance,” Huffman said. “Usually you can tell by how that question gets answered how well things are maintained.”

Remember that you are not looking for a hotel room—you are looking for a new home. Choose your roommates accordingly.

“Residents need to understand that a lease is kind of like a marriage,” Turner said. “They both have a commitment to the apartment. They can’t just walk away from it if they get mad at each other.”

Know what you are looking for before you start visiting places. Stephanie Shannon, a junior nurs-

“Agree on pricing before you sign the lease ... we didn’t, and it led to a big argument.”

PETER NOONE, JUNIOR

ing student, looked at half a dozen apartment communities before settling on her apartment in Chapel Ridge.

“I would have a list of your non-negotiable needs before you start looking, like a pool or being close to a bus line,” Shannon said. “That way, you save a lot of time by not looking at places you don’t want to live in.”

The search process seems daunting, but remember procrastinating makes things even more difficult.

“Start looking early, because the good places seem to go really fast,” senior Megan Kennedy said.

Junior Peter Noone started his housing search with three friends in February. They looked at six houses before making a decision.

“Agree on pricing before you sign the lease,” he said. “We didn’t and that led to a pretty big argument.”

Most of all, do not feel pressured. Amelia Sciandra offers this advice to those searching for housing. “You need to take time to make the decision. We sort of rushed,” she said.

Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.

A step-by-step guide on what to ask, where to look

Moving off campus is usually a big step for college students. Most do not know where to start their search and rely on upperclassmen for suggestions. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro area is full of rental options just waiting to hear from you. This list should help you search for the perfect place, and know what to ask when you find it.

Websites to find off-campus housing:

<http://www.chapelhillrent.com/>
<http://raleigh.craigslist.org/apa/>
<http://housing.unc.edu/off-campus-housing.html/>
<http://www.heelshousing.com/>

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Things to ask when seeing an apartment:

1

Looking over the contract:

- Read the lease carefully
- What are the terms of lease (number of roommates, pets allowed, etc.)?
- Do you need a co-signer?



2



Rent issues:

- What is the rent rate?
- Does this rate include utilities? If not, how much do utilities in the unit run in the winter/summer?
- Can the rent be paid with separate checks, or is a single payment required?

3

The maintenance plan:

- Does the owner handle maintenance, or is it done by an outside agency?
- How quickly do maintenance requests get handled?
- Are there any seasonal changes with the weather? (heating problems in winter, bugs in summer, etc.)



SOURCE: IAN AGER

DTH/NATASHA SMITH AND MEG WRATHER

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Campus dorms put focus on green energy

BY JACQUELINE KANTOR
STAFF WRITER

Carolina blue is always the color people associate with UNC. The housing department is one of many campus organizations trying to paint Chapel Hill another color: green.

From sustainability living-learning communities to “Turn off the lights!” stickers, UNC Housing has multiple initiatives in place to increase the environmental consciousness of on-campus living.

Each dorm has recycling bins in every room, and there are also boxes outside buildings and inside lobbies for old tennis shoes and batteries. Showers in the dorms use low-flow shower heads, and all public bathrooms utilize dual flush toilets. When doing laundry, signs encourage students to use cold water. Outdoor lights and sensor switches in the laundry rooms help keep low-traffic areas illuminated.

UNC Housing works with the Renewable Energy Special Projects Committee on initiatives to put the \$4 student fee for renewable energy to good use, said Steven Lofgren, the assistant director of facilities for UNC Housing.

“We want to protect the environment and we want to be good stewards of the students’ rent dollars,” Lofgren said.

Such environmentally conscious practices led Morrison Residence Hall, which Lofgren calls “our poster child,” to become the first building in the country to win the EPA’s National Building Competition.

Morrison’s 172 solar thermal panels provide hot water for parts of the building, and the Morrison “dashboard” in the lobby allows students to see how much energy each floor is using.

Housing also follows the guidelines from Leadership in Energy

and Environmental Design (LEED) when constructing new buildings, including residence halls.

“When we build or renovate a building, our material selection takes environmental impact into consideration,” Lofgren said.

In the future, the RESPC is considering loaning money to housing to invest in energy efficient upgrades, said Cindy Shea, director of the sustainability office. Housing would pay back the RESPC up to 90 percent of the loan over time. This would allow Housing to save money while lowering energy usage. The RESPC would be able to invest more money in green practices as a result.

Residence halls also encourage their students to be environmentally conscious through the “Residential Green Games.”

Twelve communities are currently participating in the games. They gain points in a variety of ways, said Green Games coordinator Sara Rafalson. This includes in-community programs such as screenings of movies or discussions, service projects, trips to areas of environmental interest, drives or pledges or posting pictures on the UNC Green Games Facebook page.

“They try to be greener than the dorm next door, and instill values of environmentalism,” Rafalson said. The participation level in green games is the highest it has ever been.

“This has the potential to make sustainability and environmentalism part of the average student culture,” Rafalson said.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.



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DTH/SOPHIA MORALES

Chris Martin, director of UNC energy management, is presented with a present by Energy Star spokeswoman Maura Beard (not shown). The present was for members of Watt-Busters, a UNC student group. Morrison Residence Hall won a national efficiency contest last October. The residence hall has 172 solar thermal panels that provide hot water for parts of the dorm and is home to the Sustainability Living-Learning Community.

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Safety programs support awareness, action

BY CAROLYN MILLER
STAFF WRITER

Safety is often overlooked by UNC students. They cross busy streets and walk home from the library late at night without thinking twice. Every now and then, they encounter a problem. For those in need, there are several local services to provide legal assistance and preventive measures.

The UNC Department of Public Safety acts as a local aid for students who may have concerns regarding a residence hall or individual circumstance.

Randy Young, UNC Department of Public Safety spokesman, advised students to be alert and if a situation of concern arises, call the department.

“Be on the watch and report anything suspicious. The 911 call is not just for criminal situations,” Young stated.

One of the main problems on campus is stealing.

“We see a couple hundred larcenies a year, but we see very few acts of physical violence or assault,” Young said.

In response, Young encouraged students to never leave a suite or residence hall without locking their door. He noted it takes only a couple of seconds for students to come into an unattended room and take a wallet or laptop.

Taking precautions at night is especially important. UNC SafeWalk is another safety service on campus that boasts over 2000 walks since it began in January 2010. A walk includes a female and male pair who are trained by the Department of Public Safety.

“We’re increasing the perception of safety on campus which helps produce a better learning environment for students,” said Christina Lynch, SafeWalk director and cofounder.

This is important for students at the library around 2 a.m. who would spend the night in the library instead of walking back alone to their room, Lynch noted.

Although newly founded, the program is very popular. It is a free service to students and an invaluable resource for those walking alone at night.

“What we strive for is to increase perception of safety on campus and actual safety,” Lynch said.

Students who wish to use



DTH/DUNCAN CULBRETH
Blue Light Emergency lights are located all over campus and allow students to call for help or be picked up and escorted if they feel unsafe.

SafeWalk can look online at <http://safewalk.unc.edu> for more information, or call (919) 962-7233.

Rave Guardian provides a great alternative to the buddy system. Students call the toll-free number, activate a timer and then walk to their destination. Campus police will respond if the student does not call upon arrival. Registration

is required before using the service. You can find more information at <http://www.unc.edu/uncmobile/index.php/guardian>.

Off-campus students deal with different safety issues, such as minimal outside lighting, a broken lock or the lack of a deadlock. They often contact their landlords but receive a slow response.

Student Legal Services is available for those who need free counsel on a student’s right to the law.

Dorothy Bernholz, director of Student Legal Services, said the service fulfills students’ right to have an attorney and helps enforce the laws concerning students’ home safety and landlords’ responsibilities.

Legal Services provides students with free legal advice and services from its board-certified lawyers.

“We represent them as attorneys— we go to court and litigate if need be,” she said.

If students do wish to use the program’s attorneys, Bernholz said they should make an appointment.

“Instead of trying to second-guess, just call us and let us work with you.”

When working with landlords independent of outside assistance, Bernholz said to contact them initially via e-mail – it is an undeniable action in comparison to a phone call.

In the case of larceny, Bernholz said most robbers target items like computers, televisions and jewelry.

“They’re coming in to steal your personal property,” she noted.

Students should take precautions against such an incident in their home. Bernholz advised students to contact the Chapel Hill Police Department for reports from a specific area.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

On- and off-campus safety tips for students

- Do not jaywalk. Drivers are supposed to be cautious, but they still might not see you. Wandering across the road is illegal now, too.
- If you are going on a first date, meet in a public place initially.
- Never leave your drink unattended or accept a pre-opened one.
- If you have consumed alcohol or other illegal substances, use the buddy system when using crosswalks. You might not be able to safely proceed alone.
- Feel free to call a UNC Point-to-Point demand-response van at (919) 962-7867. However, the service has a limited number of

drop-off points, most of which are on-campus.

- Have your key ready in hand when you arrive at your destination. The quicker you can get in your door, the less likely someone could bother you.
- Pay attention to the blue lights around campus. Press the button on an emergency phone pole to call the DPS response center.
- Try not to walk near dense, dark foliage. If you have to, be sure to protect your wallet or purse.
- Visit the DPS website at <http://www.dps.unc.edu/> for information on self defense classes.

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When choosing where to live, dining is a large consideration. On-campus dining at Lenoir (above) has the advantage of convenience.



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Viewpoints

Don't sacrifice style for substance

NATHAN D'AMBROSIO
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER

Sophomore political science major from Providence, RI.
E-MAIL: DAMBROSIO@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

The azure glow of the BSKi's sign. The inviting aroma of fresh pizza. The lively chatter among pedestrians and customers.

Surely these are all familiar to any UNC student.

When deciding whether to get a meal plan or dine off campus, students are often drawn in by the variety, novelty and greasy glitz of off-campus eateries.

To elect not to get a meal plan, however, is to sacrifice substance

On-campus simply cannot compete

TAYLOR HOLGATE
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER

Senior political science and journalism major from Cary.
E-MAIL: HOLGATE@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

When it comes to convenience for students who live in dorms, on-campus dining cannot be beat; but in all other aspects, off-campus dining is far superior. Lenoir and Ram's Head just can't compete with the price, variety and hours of off-campus options.

First, let's talk about price. The cheapest price per meal you can get with a UNC meal plan is \$5.33 and that's only if you go with the unlimited number of "all-you-care-to-eat" meals. If you choose a smaller plan, as many students choose to do, you will pay even more per meal. Students who get 8 meals a week end up paying more than eight dollars a meal.

Now, my favorite venue on Franklin — Cosmic Cantina — only charges \$3.33 for a regular veggie burrito. You do the math. It wouldn't be hard to spend more than \$8 on a meal on Franklin, but at least you have that choice. You could also save yourself even more money by just cooking at home. When you buy a meal plan you have no choice but to spend more.

Variety also makes off-campus dining better. You want a taco? Go to Banditos. Feeling like pizza? Stop by Franklin Street Pizza and Pasta. Craving some Asian? 35 Chinese is always an option. When you have a meal plan, you are limited to whatever the powers that be decide is for dinner.

You have to give UNC dining services some credit for trying to accommodate as many people as possible with vegan and vegetarian dishes. And they do mix it up every once in a while with ethnic theme nights, but in most cases you are stuck eating whatever is on the menu, even if you really wanted something else.

And let us get real: What is usually on the menu (besides those chocolate cookies upstairs in Lenoir) is usually utterly unappetizing and hardly worth the time and effort it takes to be swiped in and wade through the crowds.

Finally, dining halls just cannot compete with the hours of many off-campus dining options. Rams Head is open until midnight Sunday through Thursday, but if you want to eat something late at night on one of the most popular nights to do so, you are going to be out of luck. Closing early on weekends is one of the biggest problems with dining halls.

College students love drunk food and meal plans do not accommodate this demand. Rams and Lenoir cannot keep up with Franklin street venues on the weekends if they are not open.

In conclusion, there is a clear winner in the epic battle between on and off-campus dining, and that winner is off-campus. Off-campus options are cheaper, offer more choices, and are open until early morning hours. Go drop those meal plans right now!

for style.

Although the dining halls may not pour as much effort into advertising and design, save an occasional theme night at Lenoir, the emphasis remains in the area of importance: quality food.

While you might be desensitized to griping about the food in Rams Head or Lenoir, do not forget the saving grace of variety. Not every dish served on a given night would knock the socks off Julia Child, and some may be more reminiscent of high school cafeteria food than any of us would care to remember. However, the volume of options available means that there will always be something enjoyable. This can make all the difference when you have five minutes until class and need to grab something tasty without paying a lot.

For those who wonder how best to suppress the weight gain frequently experienced by college students, turning to the dining hall may be your solution. Leafy greens, skim milk, lean meat and all manner of food that will not clog your arteries, stretch your waistline or slow you down in LFIT are waiting for you in campus dining.

Finding a healthy meal at a reasonable price off-campus is a mighty task. Actually, it is more than mighty — it is nearly impossible — especially given how tantalizing a Time-Out chicken biscuit is versus a salad at Panera.

Of course, if you are so inclined, hamburgers, pizza and desserts abound in the dining halls. Variety makes the difference.

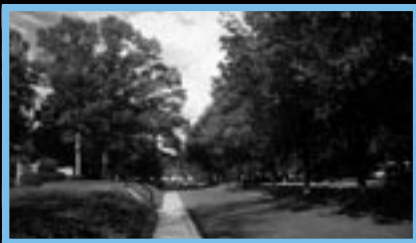
Convenience also makes a huge difference — especially in light of the typical college student lifestyle. Replacing a meal plan with grocery shopping is problematic for students who do not have cars and do not enjoy waiting in the cold for a Chapel Hill Transit bus or lugging a dozen grocery bags across campus.

Perhaps the best part of having a meal plan is the social interaction it facilitates. Getting everyone to agree on a restaurant can be tricky. Arguments over price, location and type of food are commonplace. The convenience and variety of dining on-campus means chicken fajitas, Raisin Bran and sushi can all be savored at one table among friends.

College is a unique experience which requires a unique lifestyle to make everything work. On-campus dining has a confluence of factors which makes it the right choice for your college experience.

THE ISSUE: One of the biggest considerations when deciding whether to live off-campus is, of course, food. Do you want to stay on-campus and enjoy the convenience and variety of the dining halls? Or would you rather brave it off-campus and risk shirking a visit to the grocery store for takeout every other night? To help you decide, two members of the editorial board weigh in on the pros and cons.

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Renters encouraged to purchase insurance

Landlords, attorneys support option

BY KEREN GOLDSHLAGER
STAFF WRITER

Failing to purchase renters insurance can lead to irreversible consequences and permanent loss.

Elizabeth Henderson learned this lesson the hard way when an unexpected flood damaged her apartment at The Warehouse. She was shocked to discover that the complex was not responsible for the reimbursement of her destroyed wardrobe, closet and carpet.

"We wanted to get paid for all the damage, but we found out that without renters insurance, we were on our own," Emily Freeman, Henderson's roommate, said.

According to the Student Legal Services website, tenants should realize that their property's insurance policy may not cover their personal items.

Landlords may purchase insurance policies to protect the walls, appliances and floors of their property. These policies do not cover items such as tables or televisions owned by the tenants themselves.

If an unforeseen disaster occurs, such as vandalism, fire or theft — and is not the fault of the landlord — an occupant will be responsible for paying for damages to personal property.

Most students do not expect

these disasters to strike. However, according to Legal Services attorney Dorothy Bernholz, this expectation is often proven wrong.

"You don't think these things will happen, but, it's been my experience that from time to time they do," she said.

Bernholz recommended purchasing renters insurance, if needed. She warned that, because many students are only temporary residents of Chapel Hill, these students may be covered under family insurance plans. In this case, renters insurance would not be necessary. Similarly, some credit card companies offer renters insurance benefits that counteract the need for a separate personal policy.

Erin James from Chapel Ridge Apartments said that most tenants do not own renters insurance.

"We have our own policy to cover our furniture and our apartments come fully furnished. We just recommend it if they have a nice TV or computer or anything," she said.

The Mill House Properties real-estate company, which owns popular Chapel Hill apartment complex Chancellor's Square, recommends renters insurance.

"Our leasing consultant usually suggests to tenants that they purchase insurance as she is going over their lease," said Mill House Administrative Assistant Evelyn

"You don't think these things will happen, but, it's been my experience that from time to time they do."

DOROTHY BERNHOLZ, STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES ATTORNEY

Greene.

Bernholz encouraged potential buyers to make an informed decision. When shopping for insurance, renters should be wary of "special riders," she said. Some policies will cover general items, but will require an additional fee for expensive or luxury items, such as an antique ring or an expensive phone.

Students should also be aware that not all insurance plans offer full compensation for damaged items. Some policies only offer fair market value compensation, meaning that items will be reimbursed for their current market value rather than for their original cost. In the case of goods with depreciating value, such as computers, this is an important consideration.

Harvey Eveleigh, University Insurance agent, encouraged students to consider purchasing renters insurance from their auto insurance company.

"You get a multi-policy discount, which will decrease the price of your insurance," he said.

Eveleigh also emphasized the importance of liability coverage in a renters insurance plan.

"The liability portion is very

important," he said. "If you live in an apartment complex with four buildings and you burn down the entire place, you could be sued to pay for the whole building."

Bernholz adds that liability could also be an issue when students go home for breaks.

"The pipes often freeze, causing damage that the renter could be responsible for," she said.

To alleviate the stress of all these issues, Eveleigh advised students to find an agent they are comfortable with.

"You want to have a good relationship with your insurance agent," he said.

While it is often overlooked amidst the constant stress of 8 a.m. classes, empty bank accounts and demanding professors, renters insurance is an important issue that all tenants need to seriously consider.


For students who buy dispensable items to last them through senior year, renters insurance might not be necessary. Those with keepsakes might disagree.

Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.



DTH/BAILEY SEITTER

At the Student Legal Services office, Dorothy Bernholz reviews a case with a student. She generally works with off-campus housing issues.



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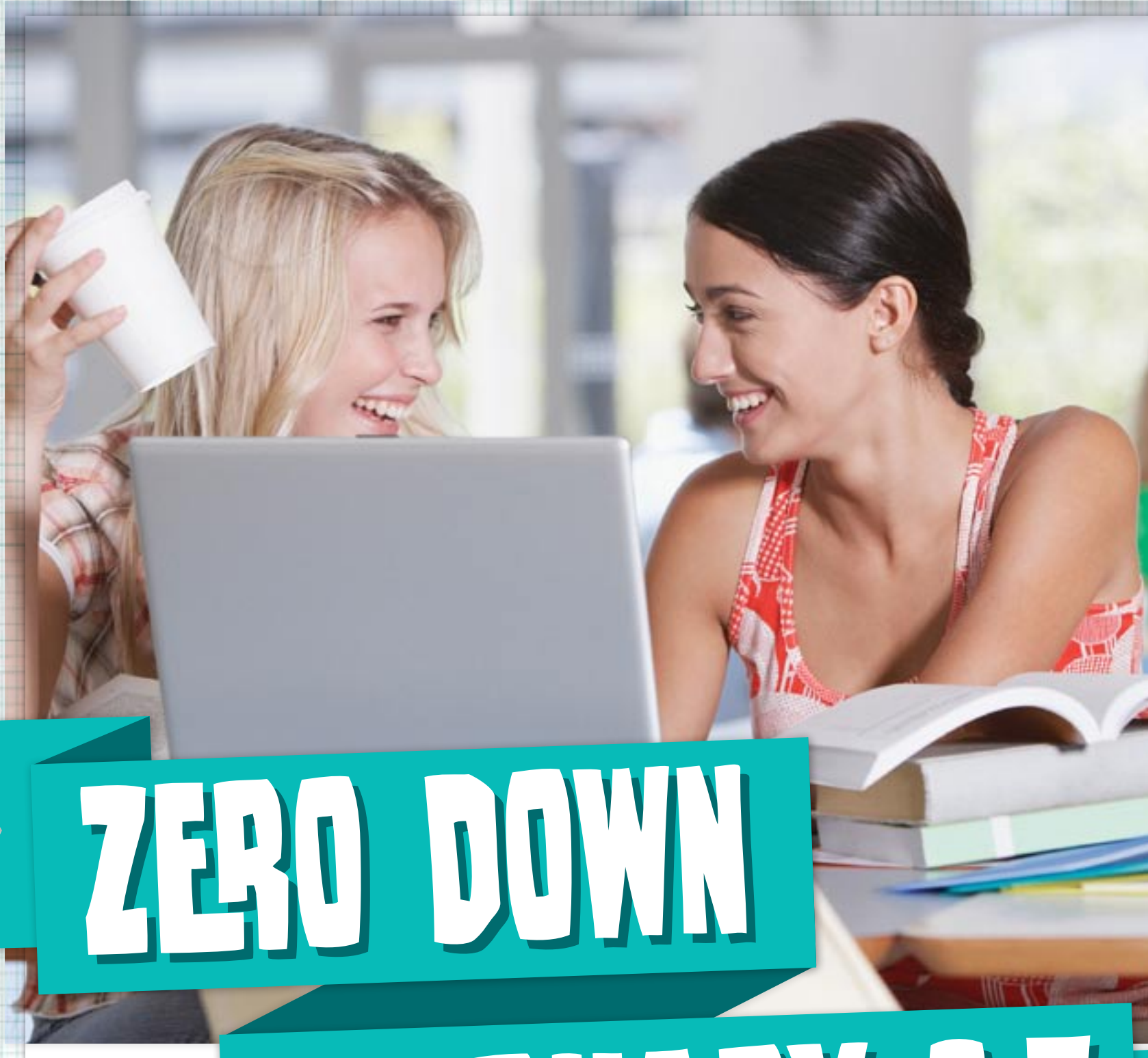
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