

Residents elevate art of room design with loft color

By NICKI WEISENSEE
Editorial Assistant

University housing officials must inspect hundreds of them annually. Low ceilings can make getting up in the mornings hazardous. But for the more space-conscious on-campus residents squeezing belongings into tiny rooms, lofts can bring efficiency and added comfort.

"It automatically gives you versatility," said Cronin Byrd, a senior from Washington, D.C. Byrd and his roommate, Yanceyville sophomore Thom Solomon, spent several hours constructing the lofts in their Connor dormitory room.

"It's our home, rather than just

a bedroom," Solomon said.

Loft permits, available at residence college desks, must be submitted before construction of a loft can begin, said Ray Jones, president of the Residence Hall Association. Students are allowed two weeks to complete construction before the loft is inspected by an official from the University Department of Housing.

If certain requirements are not met, residents have one week to bring the loft up to standards. Lofts that fail two inspections must be dismantled.

Jones described some of the criteria the lofts must meet for approval.

"Some (of the restrictions) are you can't damage the room at all, they can't block either the door or the window and you can't have anything hanging from them," Jones said. "They also must be painted with fire-retardant paint."

Loft designs across campus vary from the strictly functional to the imaginative. Perhaps one of the more intricate designs on campus belongs to Mangum residents Mark Allard, a senior from Rogers, Ark., and James Burrus, a junior from Cary. Allard and Burrus erected three lofts to create a split-level effect — two running vertically and one crossing horizontally between them

at a lower level.

"I had the middle loft my sophomore year and I toyed with the idea of having a split loft," Allard said. "James had the other two last year. So, we put them together this year and then experimented with the furniture."

Pastel colors are out in one Mangum dorm room. Neil Blanton and Richard Carroll, both sophomores from Forest City, employed a black-and-white checkerboard motif. On one wall of their Mangum dorm room, Blanton and Carroll have 12-inch mirrors alternated with 12-inch patches of black to form a huge checkerboard.

"It all started with the mirrors, then the checkerboard thing took over," Carroll said.

The room has a black carpet, black curtains, a black-and-white trunk, a black-and-white Playboy trash can and wall poster, and black-and-white checkerboard towels and flags. As for the lofts, they will be painted (surprise!) black.

However, there is a down side to all this convenience and luxury. Jones said one of the biggest hassles about a loft is that it must be taken down the last day of classes — leaving students bedless during final exams.

"I love the loft, but taking it down so much has put a lot of wear on it," Jones said. "I know that they do it in case the dorm is used for summer conferences, but I think in my case, a couple of those years it could've stayed up and not caused any

problems."

"I'm just glad that this is the last year I'll have to lug it up the stairs," Jones said. "Next year, it'll be someone else's hassle."



DTH/Dan Charlson

Mark Allard and James Burrus at home in their lofty split-level habitat

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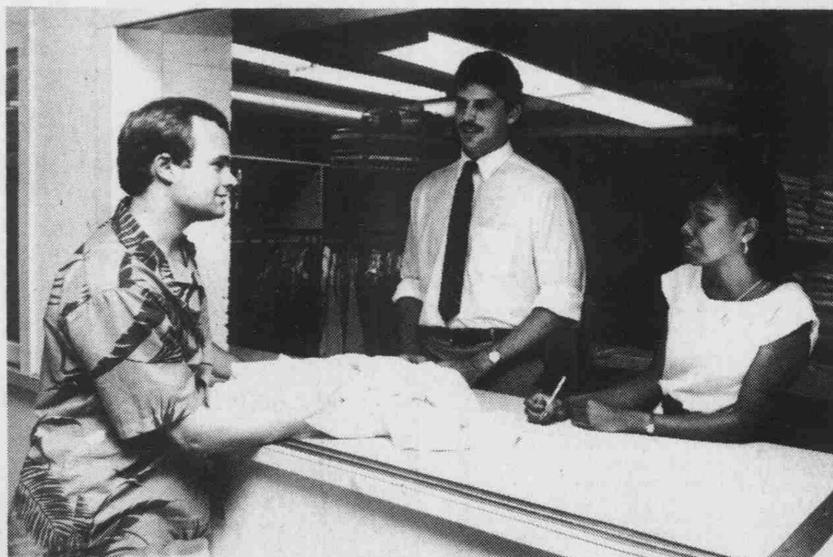
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