

Students, families adjust to life away from home

By HEATHER SMITH and LAURA WILLIAMS
Staff Writers

When Mike Neice left home to go to college, it was like a scene straight from *The Waltons*.

"It was like I was leaving forever," said Neice, a rising sophomore computer science major from Dallas, N.C. "Everybody in my family came to hug me and tell me goodbye."

For others, parting was not quite so sentimental. "It was like I went away for the weekend," said Wayne Busch, a rising sophomore pre-med major from Hendersonville. "There was no going-away speech; they just drove away. No

"I'm going to miss you."

But sooner or later, students realize going away to school means more than no curfew and free license to keep a messy room.

A near-fatal dose of homesickness or lovesickness can send any college student screaming for Mom or Dad, and the easiest way to make that needed contact is through the phone.

"Sometimes I think I just need my Mom," said Toni Porter, a rising senior political science major from Zebulon. "And when I feel like that I just give her a call or write her a letter."

Phone calls may be the most convenient way to reach out, but they're not

the cheapest. Scott Peeler, a rising sophomore political science major from Toledo, Ohio, has a system worked out with his parents that reduces his bill. "I just call them when I need to talk, and they call me right back," he said.

Most students talk to their parents at least once a week, with topics of conversation ranging from money to how the family is doing.

But sometimes the long-distance connection only emphasizes the separation. "I don't feel like I'm as much a part of the family. We're further apart because I'm not there," Busch said. "It's more of an obligation to call, and the conversation is like 'How are you? Fine. How's school? Fine.'"

The isolation can be even worse when students return home for the holidays and then have to leave again. "The time I really remember (feeling isolated) is Thanksgiving. I got to see the whole family, so when it was time to go back (to school), I didn't want to leave them. I sat in the car and cried for hours," Porter said.

Kevin Corcoran, a rising sophomore political science major from Greensboro, said he also felt twinges of homesickness at times. "I miss my little sisters, having my own room, having a car... definitely a car. The car's a big one," he said. "I also miss the constant nagging."

When students first come to college, freedom of being away from home can be exhilarating, but it can also be scary. "It was hard at first to comprehend

the responsibilities you have in college," said Gret Diffendal, a rising senior political science/speech communications major from Charlotte. "Everything I did rested on me. I had to learn to live my life apart from my family's. My identity wasn't so tied up with the family's anymore; I'd become my own person."

This independence can have a positive effect on parent-child relationships. "Mom treats me like an adult, because she knows that I'm responsible for myself, as well as things like the phone bill," Porter said.

For Katrena Allison, a rising sophomore nursing major from Cleveland, N.C., this means a more equal relationship with her parents. "We're more like friends now," she said.

After being away, time at home is more special. "We do more things together now when I'm at home. We sit in front of the fireplace and never run out of things to talk about," Allison said.

According to Peeler, "I think relationships are always growing. We notice them more when we go home, because we've been away, and the few days that we are home are intense."

But this intensity can also lead to conflict. "My freshman year, I thought I could do whatever I wanted, because I was in college. When I'd go home and go out, my mom would ask me when I was going to be in, and I'd think, 'Why is she asking me this?'" Porter said. "I respect my mom in her house now, and I respect her rights when I'm there."

It is especially difficult to balance newfound independence and ties to home if a student is financially supported by parents, Diffendal said. "It's kind of like, 'Well, Mom, I want money, but I don't want to be accountable to you.'"

Although Busch's parents serve as a financial crutch, he still resents the fact that he has been responsible for all of his expenses, he said. "I went from being a high school student to an adult in one day. I'm an adult financially, but emotionally I'm still a child to them."

"I hate it that I have to expend all of my money, and I can't even buy what I want with my own money," Busch said. "I guess this is part of the learning process."

Some students have made a deal with their parents about school financing. "I have an agreement with my parents that they will pay for school if I put academics first. That has really influenced me to work hard," Allison said.

Communication and reasonable expectations are the key to getting along when the student returns home, said Glen Martin, assistant director of the University Counseling Center.

"Parents and students should expect changes to occur. Many times parents expect the same kid to come home who left, but the kid has seen new responsibilities and has changed. The college kid often expects his parents and home life to be the same when he returns, and this is not always the case," Martin said.

Family pressure can be debilitating for students. Parents may expect per-

fection, or students may feel the need to excel so that their parents might believe the cost of their education is justified.

"My dad expects perfection. It was a 'bring one home for the Gipper' kind of thing," Busch said.

The Counseling Center often sees students who are feeling guilty about the financial burden they are putting on their parents, Martin said. "Students feel guilty because they are depriving their parents of resources they would otherwise have."

Students may feel pressure to finish in four years or to be perfect while in school so that the money is well spent. Martin said that students needed to talk about these concerns to their parents and not keep these anxieties inside.

"Even though my parents demand a lot from me, I still know they just want the best for me," Busch said.

Most students find a family away from home once they become settled in their dorm. "My friends are family. The girl (who lives) below me acts like my mother; she makes sure I do my homework and eat balanced meals. If I need to talk to someone about anything, they're there," Corcoran said.

But family remains one of the most appreciated aspects of students' lives. "I value family life," Corcoran said. "It's given me a lot of character and has helped me with my moral judgments and my values. Family is everything."

Editor's note: This article was reprinted from the November 21, 1989, issue of The Daily Tar Heel.

Your Outdoor Store!

From hiking to climbing to canoeing, whatever your favorite outdoor activity, the Trail Shop's got you covered. We carry the finest in clothing and equipment, and our friendly staff can lend expert consumer advice and free trip information.

When planning your next excursion, make your first stop at the Trail Shop!

- SALES:**
- The North Face
 - Patagonia
 - Sierra Designs
 - Vasque Boots
 - Woolrich
 - MSR Stoves

- RENTALS:**
- Camping equipment
 - Canoes



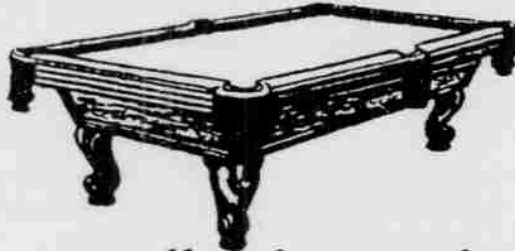
TRAIL SHOP
Chapel Hill Since 1971

929-7626
308 W. Franklin St.
(next to Fowler's)

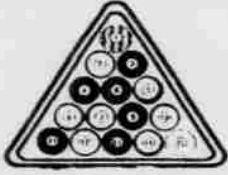
Mon-Fri, 10-7 Sat 10-6; Sun 1-5

Coming This Summer

The Parlor



Billiards & Pub



205 East Franklin Street

Featuring Regulation Billiards, Darts, Backgammon & Penté.

FUTONS ON SALE NOW!



100% Cotton Futons
TWIN FULL QUEEN
\$75 \$85 \$95

Foam & Cotton Futons
TWIN FULL QUEEN
\$89 \$110 \$139

TARHEEL MATTRESS & FUTON STORE

452 W. Franklin St. Corner Hwy 54 & 55
Chapel Hill RTP
968-8822 544-2887
929-MATT



THURSDAYS!
\$1.25 Longnecks/50¢ DRAFT

ROCK, PROGRESSIVE, & TOP 40 MUSIC

- SMITHEREENS
- ROLLING STONES
- NEW ORDER
- BILLY IDOL
- R. E. M.
- THE CLASH
- ROMANTICS
- PLANT
- ROBERT PLANT
- B 52'S
- ZZ TOP
- THE CURE
- AEROSMITH
- S. O. CONNER
- BAD ENGLISH
- ROD STEWART
- FYC



Activities Board

Programming for students by students
... get involved!

selected past events have included...

Living Color

Southern Writers Series

with Maya Angelou

Spike Lee

Union Bash

Visual AIDS
a poster exhibit

WALKING ACROSS EGYPT
world premiere play

The CONNELLS

What happens next year is up to you...

- Committees...
- ADVERTISING
 - COLLEGE BOWL
 - CONCERTS
 - CURRENT ISSUES
 - FILM
 - FORUM
 - GALLERY
 - PERFORMING ARTS
 - PERFORMING ARTS OUTREACH
 - PUBLIC RELATIONS
 - SOCIAL ADVENTURES
 - SPECIAL PROJECTS
 - THEATRE ARTS

962-1157