

The Guru

The Guru explains how to turn your casual relationship into a commitment. See column p. 5

OPINION

The Little Things

Jonathan Chapman examines the squirrel life at Elon. See column p. 6

Housing process provides questions, not answers

Eric Hydrick

Columnist

Housing information is supposed to be sent out to students soon, which means it's time to try to figure out where we want to live.

Juniors and seniors are encouraged, but not required, to move off campus, especially with the number of freshmen and sophomores for which Elon has guaranteed housing. Underclassmen can apply to live off campus and some juniors and seniors live on campus still. So, where to live during 2004 and 2005 really is your own preference.

But where should you go? Elon has a variety of housing options. Do you have a fairly large group of friends that you want to live with? Or do you just have one friend whom you want as your roommate? Do you want more privacy than the typical dorm offers? Do you want to have all of your utilities covered through one lump payment at the beginning of the semester? What kind of people would you like on your hall – just guys, just girls, or both sexes? Do you want to live close to most of the academic buildings, or do you prefer a walk to and from classes to clear your head?

There are a lot of things that must be considered before deciding where to live, but most of the questions are about whether to stay on campus.

If you do decide to go for an apartment, then you have a whole new set of things to worry about. How are you going to split payments? What kind of general habits are you going to have about lights, heat, cleaning, etc.? What are you going to do on breaks? You don't have to leave, but you do still have to pay for bills and rent. How are you going to furnish your apartment (tables, chairs, beds, desks, etc.)? Can you afford an apartment, as well as the gas for commuting to and from school? Can either you or your roommate cook? Or are you going to eat out all the time? What are your and your roommate's eating habits?

Of course, the hardest part about housing is the roommate question. Are you happy with your current roommate? Is he or she happy

with you? Do you want to live with someone else? If so, who? What are your roommate's preferences as far as his or her living situations? Do you just want to take your chances on the roommate lottery? Is one of you a morning person while the other likes to sleep until mid-afternoon? Does one of you like to have people over all the time while the other just wants peace and quiet? Are you sure you can stand to spend a year with this person?



Eric Hydrick

There are a lot of decisions to be made during the whole housing process, and very little good, generic advice that can be given.

The best thing to do is to decide on your preferences as far as whether or not you live on campus, where specifically you'd like to live (either which apartment complex or which dorm) and who you'd like to live with.

The first thing to concentrate on should be the roommate. Living quarters usually can't be that bad if you're living with good friends. Also, maybe your future roommate has a few ideas of his or her own that you hadn't thought of, which would help to simplify the search for where to live next year.

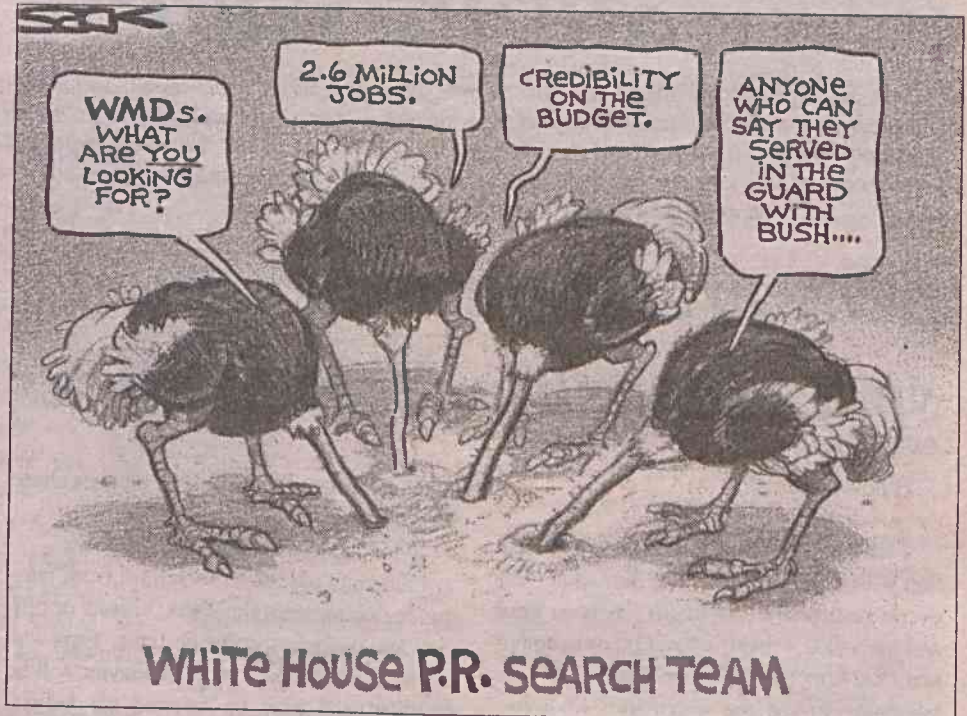
Ultimately, finding a specific housing location isn't that hard. Finding a person to live with is what's complicated. Once you've gotten that done, finding a home shouldn't be too bad. Also, look at how much water, electricity, and food you use.

Try to figure out about how much it would cost to buy your own food, pay the electricity to keep the computer on all day so you can stay logged into AIM, and pay for all the water that gets used throughout the day.

If you think you'd use a huge amount, perhaps it'd be better to stay on campus, where you don't pay for any of that. Also, think about what you'd like more, a place out in the "real world," or somewhere here on Elon where everything is close and convenient.

Just remember, in the end, your entire housing selection process revolves around one thing: you.

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KRT Campus

NASCAR dads, a new demographic?

Dan Hanson

Columnist

So, President Bush goes down to Daytona Beach, Fla., for the Daytona 500 and immediately the press latches on that he is trying to court the NASCAR dad demographic. I mean, come on. What are the media and politicians thinking? He makes one trip and all of a sudden we are talking about the president courting this demographic; this is a waste of time. When you look at the statistics behind this demographic and its members' voting habits, you can see how ridiculous this sounds.



Dan Hanson

What is a NASCAR dad? Well, Larry Sabato, a pundit, calls them "middle to lower-middle-class males who live in rural areas and traditionally vote Democratic but have switched to Republican over the past few years." According to an ABC News report, the NASCAR dads accounted for 2 percent of the overall vote in 2000 and overwhelmingly voted for President Bush – hardly a group that should be receiving this amount of attention.

The attention stems from the press, political scientists and politicians all looking for a group that will tip the scale toward one candidate or another; otherwise, a single answer to why things happen the way they do. This is so pointless. Segmenting people into groups

accomplishes nothing. The press and others read into things too much. President Bush wanted to make an appearance at an event that is synonymous with America and where a large party of these constituents would be. That is smart politics on his part. It would be just the same as John Kerry going to a Boston Red Sox game talking with fans. Is he trying to court the "semi-professional baseball family vote?" Of course not. He is there to talk and have a good time.

If politicians and the media want to focus on swing voters, concentrate on independents. Bottom line, as segmented as the nation is, 45 percent of the population is independent. So how about we look at those 45 percent instead of focusing on only 2 percent? We segment and think about every little thing that we often lose track of the big picture. And that big picture includes millions of people that have not participated in electoral politics. Remember, you are already lumped into one of the groups which gets no air time – the college kid. Get informed and look at the issues and vote because it does make a difference.

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