

Spring Break options becoming limited

Many travel agents say airlines and hotels are full for the upcoming break.

BY CAROL ADAMSON
STAFF WRITER

Students who have not already made plans for Spring Break might be out of luck.

As the break nears, fewer and fewer travel packages to popular destinations such as Cancun, the Bahamas, Jamaica and Florida are available to student travelers said Linda James, a manager at Circle Travel on Franklin Street.

"Those Spring Break weeks go fast," James said. "At this point it's a little late. Most of the spots are filled up."

Peter Black, a travel consultant with Cole Travel in Chapel Hill, said airline tickets were especially difficult to get.

"Air space is now completely gone for all airlines at good prices," Black said. "Anyone right now who would like to book something is going to end up driving or perhaps getting a charter."

Black said unusually large numbers of people were traveling this year.

"People are traveling now more than they ever have in history, and the planes are filling up," he said. "If students want to go some place (during) Spring Break, they should make plans by Thanksgiving."

Kristina Price, a spokeswoman for United Airlines, said limited airline seating was available due to the large numbers of people traveling during the break.

"Spring Break is typically a very busy time for travel," Price said. "Students wishing to travel to warm destinations should call ahead of time, not only to ensure that they have a seat but also to find the lowest prices."

Some students unable to procure air-

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PETER BLACK
Cole Travel consultant

line tickets or wishing to save money said they chose to drive to closer vacation destinations.

Ashley Birk, a freshman from Gastonia, said she and a group of friends were unable to purchase airplane tickets to Cancun, Mexico, and instead decided to go on a road trip for their break.

"Some friends and I tried to arrange a trip to Mexico, but we couldn't get plane tickets," Birk said.

"We decided to go to Myrtle Beach

instead."

Tim Cassidy, a golf director at the Anderson Inn in Myrtle Beach, S.C., said hotel space might be limited, however.

Students wishing to reserve a hotel room should call now in order to obtain the best spots, he said.

"(Students) need to start calling as soon as possible," he said. "Rooms are filling up fast."

Some students said planning ahead could make all the difference.

Holly Richardson, a freshman from Charlotte, said she and a group of friends were traveling to Daytona Beach during the break. Richardson said reservations were hard to get at first but that by researching the area she was able to find the best deal.

"The research helped," Richardson said. "I asked a lot of questions and compared rates. Good deals are out there. You just have to know where to look."

Commission discusses proposed condominiums for Meadowmont

BY JOHN GARDNER
STAFF WRITER

The Chapel Hill Appearance Commission and Design Review Board conducted its initial conceptual plan review of the Meadowmont Hilltop Condominiums on Wednesday night.

Board members cited concerns about the steepness of the topography and agriculture.

The primary concern about the proposed condominiums came from Board member Bruce Ballentine, who said the land might be too steep to conduct the

planned construction. "This is a difficult topography to build on because the parking is two levels under the street."

Board member Sara Haskett said she was concerned about the steepness of the land surrounding the first building of the proposed four-building project.

Although Meadowmont representative Roland Gammond did not comment on this particular aspect of the proposal, he said he did not think the project had many flaws because a nearly identical condominium complex was approved recently by the Appearance Commission in Raleigh.

"The details of the Meadowmont project are basically the same as our 100 Edinburgh condominium project, which was approved by the Raleigh Appearance Commission."

Another concern about the condominium project was the appearance of the surrounding agriculture.

Ballentine said agriculture was a very important issue but that because Meadowmont had its own agricultural plan, the individual condominium plan was not a vital concern.

"Meadowmont is a 400-acre development, so agriculture has been planned

on a large-scale instead of on an individual basis," he said.

Ballentine said this was for the better because a large-scale agricultural project would be more organized than if each smaller project tried to combine its efforts.

Planning Technician Kay Tapp said the board would have to work with Meadowmont until it was able to reach a compromise and an application was submitted. "The next step (the board) will take is to review what was said at the meeting and make a formal recommendation."

Pope embarks on historic pilgrimage through Cuba

The Pope advocated more freedoms for the Cuban Catholic Church.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAVANA — Pope John Paul II, a "messenger of truth and hope," began a historic pilgrimage Wednesday to Cuba, land of hardship, embattled faith and an aging, struggling revolution.

President Fidel Castro, dressed in a double-breasted blue suit instead of his usual fatigues, was among those waiting to greet John Paul as the 77-year-old pope slowly climbed down from his plane after arriving at 4 p.m.

For more than an hour, at the center of world attention in the televised airport ceremony, the white-clad pope and the gray-bearded 71-year-old revolutionary moved easily together as they met.

The Cuban leader aided the bent and ailing pontiff, offering his hand at the pope's elbow.

Things may not be so solicitous when the two hold their substantive session Thursday.

Castro hopes the visit will gain stature for his revolution and support for an end to the more than three-decade-old U.S. economic embargo.

The Cuban church hopes the papal visit will help it expand its sphere of

influence.

En route to Havana, the pope told reporters aboard the papal plane that he wants to hear from Castro "the full truth of his country, about relations between church and state."

Standing at an airport lectern under a blazing sun, the pope celebrated this "happy and long-awaited day" and spoke out on the U.S.-Cuban standoff that has long isolated this communist nation.

"May Cuba, with all its magnificent potential, open itself up to the world, and may the world open itself up to Cuba," he declared.

And he firmly endorsed what he called the "legitimate desires" of the Roman Catholic Church in Cuba — its quest for more privileges under Castro's government.

Castro, in his address, denounced the U.S. embargo as "genocide" and sought to identify his revolution's ideals with those of the church.

"Another country will not be found better disposed to understand your felicitous idea ... that the equitable distribution of wealth and solidarity among men and peoples should be globalized," said Castro, one of the world's last communist leaders.

The papal visit, long delayed and much anticipated, may help set a new course for the Cuban church, if not for Cuba itself.

Campus calendar

Thursday

10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. — Alpha Phi Omega will sponsor a blood drive in Union 203-206, 211-212. Come save a life by donating blood.

12:30 p.m. — The Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center will host "Around the Circle," a weekly discussion group. Sponsored by the Mu Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity Inc., this week's topic will be "Educating the Black Man." At 5 p.m. at the BCC, Malik McCluskey and Rachael Murphey will facilitate a discussion on Martin Luther King Jr.'s last two books, "Where Do We Go From Here," and "Why We Can't Wait."

Items of interest

The UNC Ballroom Dance Club will sponsor a ballroom dance with taped music in the Great Hall from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday. Students and nonstudents, couples and singles are welcome. Admission is \$6 for the public and \$4 for students. For more information, call 914-4003 or 782-8212.

The UNC School of Public Health will sponsor a blood drive on the second floor lounge of Rosenau Hall on Tuesday from noon to 4:30 p.m. Call 929-2397 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are also welcome.

The Cross Cultural Communications Institute of the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center is sponsoring a weekly dialogue workshop series for black and white women to come together and discuss issues. Dialogues will begin Tuesday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the BCC and will continue on Tuesdays for a minimum of four weeks.

The Campus Y is accepting applications for elected offices. Applications are available in the Campus Y and are due Wednesday at 5 p.m. Elections will be held Feb. 10.

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