

Potluck living a grab bag RHA aims to correct quickly

BY ANN NGUYEN
STAFF WRITER

College is a circus. The first in the ring? The roommate.

And while some believe that living with someone random is as essential to the freshman experience as the dreaded walk to North Campus, going potluck is ultimately risky.

For freshman Brittini Harbin, going potluck despite knowing many people from her high school coming to Carolina was part of what she hoped to be the true college experience.

"When we first met, she seemed shy but nice," Harbin said. "I didn't think we would have as many problems as we did."

What started as a mutual indifference between the two developed into a full-fledged catfight.

Because her roommate had an 8 a.m. class three times a week, she constantly left her alarm clock ringing at 6 a.m. while in the shower and "accidentally" slamming into Harbin's lofted bed.

"I would wake up at 6 a.m. on a day I didn't have classes and just think, 'I'm going to kill her right now,'" Harbin said.

"During a meeting with the community director, her main beef with me was I liked the Red Sox too much, I'm not neat enough, and my

music taste of Muse and Radiohead was offensive."

The horror stories of getting that disastrous potluck roommate are many.

Some boasts speak of a Muppet Show-obsessed roommate who, in lieu of bringing a fridge, suggested using a cooler instead and continuously filling it with ice.

Then there's the inevitable "sexile" when a roommate's significant other comes to town — understandable if infrequently, annoying when every weekend.

But going potluck doesn't always end with someone wanting to wrap a curtain cord around his roommate's throat.

"My current roommate and I were potluck roommates our freshman year," senior Alison Helmink said. "We were inseparable for the rest of the year and decided to live together our sophomore year also. Now we joke about how if we weren't randomly put together and 'accidentally' slammed into Harbin's lofted bed."

So the moral of the story is no one can really predict how a roommate situation works out — for better or for worse.

Freshman Lucas Darden, one of the few on campus with a coveted room in Old East, found himself

living in a triple with a teammate from the Ultimate Frisbee team and the teammate's friend.

"We never really had any major problems," Darden said. "They never left the room, though. One roommate played Halo 24/7."

A couple months later, Darden said, his Halo-playing roommate gradually stopped attending classes and dropped out of UNC while his other roommate from the Frisbee team moved out this semester in order to work at a different North Campus dorm.

"I'd say picking my own roommates worked out pretty well," Darden said.

For the most part, the consensus on picking a roommate versus going potluck simply depends on the luck of the draw.

But as amusing as some of the potluck roommate horror stories are to hear, experiencing them oneself is a completely different story.

Contact the Features Editor at features@unc.edu.

Several options for solving crises

BY WHITNEY KISLING
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

You know the story.

You're working on a final paper, poring over that POLI 100 book and checking out notes on Blackboard.

The page won't load, and you realize it's because your Internet suddenly isn't connected any more.

It's the facilities sector of the Department of Housing and Residential Education to the rescue.

This and other unfortunate housing occurrences usually can be fixed with the click of a mouse or the ring of a phone.

Here's what to do when you get stuck with a broke, leaky or disconnected anything:

If you have Internet access

■ Go to housing.unc.edu and

click "Room Repair."

■ There is a form to fill out, which requires an Onyen and contact information.

■ The housing department aims to send your request to the appropriate group within half an hour.

For personal contact

■ Each residence hall has a resident adviser for every floor. In the high-rise South Campus buildings, most floors house two RAs.

■ If you have a problem during the day, it's best to seek out your floor RA.

■ Your RA can get in touch with the community director and the appropriate group for your problem.

■ Every night, an RA is on call for each community.

■ If you have a problem at night, the RA on-call number should be posted on each floor's bulletin board. It's also available at the front desk.

Consider this first

While the housing department is willing to fix nearly any problem with your suite, there are some things to think about before you ask for help.

■ The housing department includes in its expectations of residents that each room be clean. So if you're making a request for your broken air conditioner, it's a good idea to make sure a pathway is cleared.


■ Residents are responsible for their guests. If you have guests, be sure they know the rules so that if there's a problem, you aren't stuck dealing with the consequences of their actions.

■ Know the rules before you call. You can access all of the housing departments rules, regulations and codes of conduct at housing.unc.edu/policies/expectations_responsibilities/index.html.

The more you know before you call, the more clear your request can be — and the more likely you are to get prompt service.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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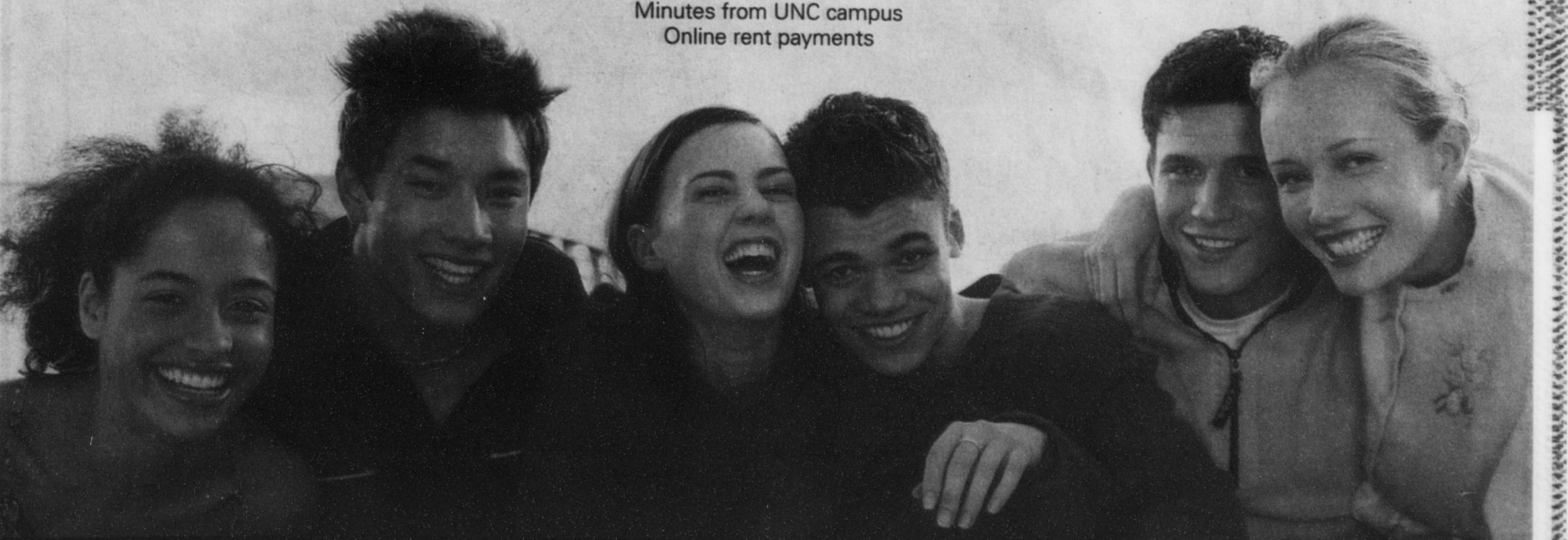
- Eat all your neatly labeled food?
- Camp out on the couch with a special friend — a LOT?
- Let an annoying pet own the place?
- Breathe loud?

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