

Maryland students choose substance-free dormitories

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP) — Places like the sixth floor of Denton Hall at the University of Maryland are redefining what it means to have a good time at college these days: It's a no-smoking, no-drinking, no-drugs zone.

In fact, although the College Park campus has something of a reputation as a party school, there's a waiting list of students who want to get into the university's "substance-free housing."

Some students say they just want to avoid temptation. Most, however, say it's just quieter and has fewer distractions.

"People don't come back from the bars and throw up on the floor like in other dorms," said R. Rosenberg, a 19-year-old sophomore from Potomac who lives on Denton's sixth floor. Last year, the floor above us was really disgusting."

About 1,000 students of the 10,000 people in campus housing at College Park picked substance-free housing this year, signing contracts agreeing not to bring alcohol or tobacco into their rooms. (Drugs are banned in all dorms already.)

Some entire buildings on campus are substance-free, while some floors in otherwise

unrestricted dorms allow no alcohol or cigarettes.

Substance-free dorms began in 1989 at the University of Michigan, which now has 2,600 students opting for the subdued atmosphere.

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J.R. Rosenberg
Denton resident

Vassar, Washington University in St. Louis and the Rochester Institute of Technology in upstate New York are among dozens of other schools offering substance-free housing.

The 32,900-student University of Maryland started the program in 1993 as requests rose for non-drinking roommates, said Jan Davidson, assistant director of

resident life.

Davidson said fewer than 10 students have broken their pledge to refrain from smoking and drinking in the substance-free dorms. Violators are asked to move somewhere else on campus.

Every Saturday night when other students head for bars and fraternity houses, the residents of Denton's sixth floor head to the student lounge. "Club Ed," as they call it, has all the trappings of a dance club with loud music and strobe lights — but without smoke and alcohol.

Meg Smith, 19, a sophomore from Silver Spring, moved into a substance-free dorm as a freshman because she didn't think she would be able to relate to students who smoke or drink.

"I thought the friendships in a regular dorm would be all superficial," Smith said Wednesday. Instead, she found "the family" on Denton Hall's sixth floor.

"This is our haven," she said. "It's custom-made for us."

Their choice isn't universally popular.

"Maybe we have acquired a reputation as a bunch of geeks," said sophomore Pete Murray, a 19-year-old from Bel Air.

South Carolina evacuates for Fran

BEAUFORT, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina's governor called out the National Guard and ordered a half-million people evacuated from the coast Wednesday as Hurricane Fran swirled toward land with 115 mph winds on a path alarmingly similar to Hugo's seven years ago.

"Fran is a large and brutal storm, and she is not to be trifled with in any shape, way, fashion or form," Gov. David Beasley said.

The storm is most likely to hit land Thursday night north of Charleston, the National Hurricane Center said. That's where Hurricane Hugo, packing 140 mph winds, came ashore with devastating effect in 1989.

"I've ridden them all out, but I'm debating whether to go this time," 76-year-old Joe Lipsitz said as he stood outside his store in Beaufort, about 70 miles south of Charleston. His son, Neil, wasn't hesitating.

"This one I'm getting out,

after seeing what Hugo did to Charleston," he said.

Hugo caused almost \$8 billion in damage and killed 35 people as it tore through the Caribbean and up the East Coast. Most of the damage was in South Carolina.

At 5 p.m., Fran was centered 410 miles southeast of Charleston, wobbling northwest at 12 mph, with hurricane-force wind — 74 mph or higher — extending 145 miles out. A hurricane warning was posted from north of Brunswick, Ga., to just north of Cape Lookout, N.C.

Fran was about as large as Hugo and had the potential to become just as strong as it passed over warm water, the National Hurricane Center said.

"I do believe this one is going to get us, that's the way it's heading," said John Gallop, dockmaster at Beaufort's marina, where workers boarded up windows.

In addition to announcing a

mandatory evacuation of the South Carolina coast, Beasley declared a state of emergency and activated the National Guard. Guardsmen took up positions directing traffic, and at least 1,000 were arriving in the coastal towns.

In Charleston, a sign on one restaurant read "Scram Fran" and boat owners scrambled to get their craft out of the water or to tie them down.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency sent crews to the Southeast. FEMA Director James Lee Witt said six tractor-trailers loaded with cots, tents, generators, blankets and other supplies were ready to go; the Agriculture Department has earmarked food; and eight medical teams were on alert.

Earlier in the day, Fran brushed the Bahamas and the Navy ordered ships in Florida and Georgia out to sea to ride out the storm.

Congress aims to adjourn early

WASHINGTON (AP) — Eager to ship their candidates home to defend Republican congressional majorities, GOP leaders decided Tuesday to drop any plans for an election-season tax-cut bill. They scrapped a curtailed agenda that would let Congress adjourn for the year by late September.

With lawmakers back at work after a month of political conventions and vacations, the announcement signaled that top Republicans saw little gain — for their own candidates or GOP presidential contender Bob Dole — in forcing a long series of high-profile vetoes battles with President Clinton.

Instead, they believe it best to leave lawmakers stumping at home, where the campaign can become a series of local races. Democrats would like to make the contests a referendum on unpopular House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.

"It's important we have the

opportunity to go back and get engaged in debate back home, and not here," said Sen. Connie Mack, R-Fla., a member of the Senate GOP leadership.

To achieve their goal, leaders want Congress to complete the 12 remaining spending bills for the upcoming fiscal year, tackle a few other issues, and leave.

Democrats, eager to deflate the tax-cut drive that has become the heart of Dole's presidential campaign, expressed little displeasure that there would be no congressional fight over lowering levies.

"There is very little desire at this time to have a debate on tax cuts," said Senate Minority Leader

Tom Daschle, D-S.D. With Election Day just two months off, Gingrich and Lott gathered their leadership teams to chart plans for the coming weeks.

Afterward, they said they hoped to adjourn by Sept. 27, a week earlier than the initial target, and said they had ruled out sending the president a bill trimming taxes.

Before the recess, some Republicans — especially conservatives — had been eager to send Clinton a measure reducing various levies, thinking the likely veto would show anew that he is not as dedicated to tax-cutting as they are.

But Dole has since staked his presidential fate on a sweeping tax-cut plan that includes a 15 percent reduction in income-tax rates. That leaves many Republicans worrying that a fight with Clinton over a different package of congressional tax reductions would distract and confuse voters over the GOP's message.



Gingrich

Mathematics Department Weekly Review Sessions

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- MATH 131 THURSDAYS ZACH 203 7-9 p.m.
- MATH 141 THURSDAYS BLOC 102 7-9 p.m.
- MATH 142 WEDNESDAYS HELD 111 7-9 p.m.
- MATH 166 THURSDAYS HELD 111 7-9 p.m.
- MATH 151 THURSDAYS BLOC 158 7-9 p.m.

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