

A Hunting We Will Go ...

BY MARIUM MOHUIDDIN
Staff Writer

The fall semester is just around the corner. Apartments and houses are coming on and off the real-estate market, leaving students in an anxious pursuit of a place to live. This predicament may sound familiar to many, but there are solutions to these problems — they just have to be uncovered.

Jason Scott, staff assistant for the Department of Student Life, said living off campus is something all students should experience.

"I personally would like to live off campus," he said. Your first years you should stay in the dorm, but off-campus life shows you the real world.

"There are about 32,000 students who live off-campus, and they are caught off guard because they have to deal with the grown-up world. You have to do the dishes, pay the rent and keep up with school," he said.

When the choice has been made to move off campus another question arises: "where do I live, and how do I get started?"

Scott said off-campus housing provides students with a great wealth of information. All the students have to do is knock on the door.

"We offer all sorts of information about living off campus," he said. "There is a campus manual providing assistance for all types of questions, a conflict mediator, a lease specialist, a student attorney and a database with information about finding a roommate. Most

students take advantage of the lease specialist, but we deal with all problems from clogged commodes to leaky roofs."

Carol Cienega, manager of Briarwood apartments, said the most renters of apartments are college students or are affiliated with the University.

"There are numerous ways of finding a place to live," she said. "Off-campus housing has a lot

of information and they make a survival manual about the things to do and not to do. It includes a list of apartments and helpful tips.

"In February, at the MSC, there is a housing fair, where we (apartment complex renters) hand out fliers informing students about what is out there."

Andrew Smith, a realtor with Century 21, has incorporated a different approach to inform the buyer about what is available.

"Talking house" is a small a.m. broadcaster that sits in front of the house and transmits a description about the house," he said. "When you drive up to the house, there will be a sign that says tune to this radio station to hear about this house and the radio will tell you about the things that can not be seen from the outside."

Smith said a lot of students buy houses or condominiums because their parents feel it would be better if their child had a house to live in which they could resell when they have finished their studies.

"Apartments have many rules," he said. "There is much more freedom in a house. If you want to have a dog, you can't have one in an apartment, but in a

house you can do whatever you want. Of course there are advantages to both; it just depends on what you are looking for."

Jennifer Coulthurst, a junior sociology major, said she began looking for her apartment in the newspaper, but ended up using the Internet.

"My mom found a site where all the Bryan-College Station apartment complexes are listed, including the prices and what makes the apartment," she

said. "It was helpful because I did not have to call about the information; I found it all from the Internet. It may not be as convenient as living on campus where everything is right in front of you, but it is a lot bigger."

Looking for the ideal place to live off-campus can be a tiring and hot process. The temperature may be rising, but future renters should pay attention to what lies ahead down the road.

Scott said students should research the property thoroughly and use the resources provided by off-campus housing.

"Students should view a property first of all and check out the reputation of the building," he said. "We have a resident reaction file, which is a file filled with comments and complaints about where the students have lived. If there are a lot of complaints about a place they should rethink where they are going to live. Look for the warning signs. Stop a problem before it gets worse by coming in and asking us for help."



some- one who will pay more."

Coulthurst said there are many factors students need to realize when selecting a place to live.

"Students should not restrict themselves," she said. "Everybody wants an apartment that is near their friends or in College Station, but those apartments are the ones that are hard to get because they are the popular apartments. You have to broaden your horizons about living."

Coulthurst said many students do not like the idea of living in Bryan, but in her opinion living there has a lot of advantages.

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Lethal Weapon 4

Rated R

Starring by Mel Gibson and Danny Glover
Showing at Hollywood 16



Lethal Weapon 4 brings back the familiar cast for more of the same, with more explosions, comedy and the addition of Chris Rock in an effort to bring in younger audiences that may not already be loyal to the series.

In a story involving modern-day slave trade from China and the "Triads" gang, Mel Gibson and Danny Glover continue to develop the "buddy cop" idea that has been copied so often and so poorly.

Chinese action star Jet Li appears as one of the most threatening movie villains to appear in recent memory. Moviegoers tired of natural disasters and unnatural monsters should have no problem enjoying this great summer movie. (A) — Gray Whitten

Small Soldiers

Rated PG-13

Starring the voices of Tommy Lee Jones and Frank Langella
Playing at Hollywood 16

It is every child's dream for the toys they play with to come alive play with themselves. Take that dream, add about \$1 billion worth of special effects and there is *Small Soldiers*.

The movie doesn't play out like a 90 minute toy commercial, but it comes pretty close.

A military industrial conglomerate takes over a small toy company with intentions of creating the ultimate toy.

The term action figure takes on new meaning as military technology and plastic playthings are joined in a match made in toy heaven.

The titanic toyline is composed of the peaceful Gorgonites and war-mongering Commando Elite. When a shipment of the action figures end up in a small town, where all hell breaks loose.

The effects are great, with some inspired scenes. However, the rest of the movie is fairly pedestrian and predictable. It's also a shame that the movie is Phil Hartman's swan song, but then again, this is the man who made *House Guest*. (C+) — Travis Irby



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