

Heights residents host roaches

By Joseph Guberman

The occupancy limit for Meade Heights is four students per unit, but these days there are a number of uninvited guests inside the university apartments: Bugs!

These menacing insects range in variety from spiders to roaches, and in size from squishable to stompers. They live in all the campus apartments, making their way across floors and up walls, frightening innocent students along the way.

Pests seek refuge based on either the construction of the dwelling, or the lack of cleanliness inside. In the case of Meade Heights, the bugs are there for both reasons.

One story floating around campus is when Meade Heights was originally built as Air Force quarters, the government had a similar project underway in Florida. The same number of units were built, and for the same purpose, to house Air Force families. Only somehow the plans were mixed up. Instead of building summer homes in Florida and winter homes in Pennsylvania, the contractors goofed. The apartments in Florida had basements and fireplaces, while the Pennsylvania units were built on concrete slabs with summer patio doors.

The result, an invasion of

oriental roaches, which are huge dark insects who thrive on dampness. They made their way up through the sewers and drains, eventually settling down into the concrete slabbed quarters.

Another roach species living in the Heights is smaller and lighter in color. They move in because of unsanitary conditions: Dirty dishes stacked up in the sink, trash lying around, and empty beer cans gathering dust. Some apartments have more problems with this than others.

In two random inquiries, the first apartment didn't have a small roach problem: The students living there kept it clean, washed the dishes daily, and even scrubbed the kitchen floor occasionally. In the other apartment, the roaches were a problem: The students admitted they've never scrubbed the floor, the dishes were piled up in both sinks, and the smell of grease was apparent throughout the dwelling.

And, according to Mrs. Chrismer, of the Susquehanna Valley Pest Control, "those conditions cause a continual problem, because this type of roach lives off of grease and then they lay their eggs around the stove and refrigerator."

The Meade Heights campus official, Frank Williams, says he's aware of the problems. He feels the best solution is to, "keep the floors scrubbed and the stoves cleaned." He added,

"anyone with a serious problem should see me and we'll take care of it. But, residents should expect some bugs because of the way the apartments are built."

Students in Meade Heights have varied opinions on the bug dilemma. One student who lives in a very neat apartment says, "sometimes they aren't so bad, but occasionally they're all over the place."

Another student living in a very messy apartment said, "I hate them, and I hate taxes, too, and there's nothing you can do about either one."

For bug control spraying is done annually by maintenance. And, in extreme cases a professional exterminator is called in. Bug expert Chrismer believes, "of the different types of roaches, the small grease-

eating ones are easier to control than the large oriental roaches, who'll continue to multiply underneath the home."

Williams agrees that every unit will have some bugs, but insists "students will be charged if their uncleanness leads to excess bugs."

In spite of all the precautions taken, students should expect to be bugged. The other day, while munching on a Big-Mac, I saw an oriental roach. I was caught so off guard by the size of this miniature armored personnel carrier, making its way across the floor, that I choked on my burger. One of my roommates is also having problems. He keeps running across the street in the middle of the night attacking spiders, after receiving hysterical phone calls from his girlfriend.



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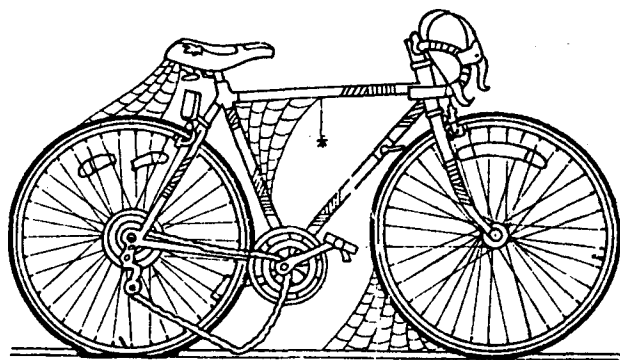
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