

Carolina!



Nick Morgan, David Riding, Kenny Loeber and Andrew Abbey are participants in NADA.

NADA apartments offer haven for culturally diverse tenants

By BRIAN SHELTON
Staff Writer

Blending right in with the Gambrell and Humanities buildings are the residence halls which make up NADA apartments.

The three structures, one red, one yellow and one blue, house about 60 students, some from the Columbia area and others from the far corners of the earth.

NADA is, according to the residence hall handbook, an "international community." It is a place where American students and students from other countries coexist for a semester and learn about each other's customs.

The international students come from England, Canada, Ireland, Mexico, Argentina, Lebanon, Germany, Cameroon, Australia, Hungary and many other countries.

Some are sent here by choice while others are involved in exchange programs which selected this school for them.

Most of the apartments in NADA accommodate four to six students and have a mixture of Americans and International students.

The suites in the red NADA have two bedrooms, a bathroom, a completely furnished kitchen, a dining room and a den.

Some of the NADA apartments were recently renovated, with luxuries such as dishwashers and ceiling fans being added to make the rooms more desirable.

Many of the international students have glowing praise about the country which is hosting them. Andrew Abbey, a junior from Newcastle, England, said he heard America was "bollocks," an expression of dislike where he hails from, but has found this not to be the case.

He says he has enjoyed his stay so far but has noticed a few distinct differences between the school system here and the one in England.

"There is so much work that you have to do here compared to England," Abbey says. "In England, it's all fun and games until the last month, when all the exams hit you at once. Here, you have so much daily work that it's

The international students are not the only ones benefiting from the cultural exchange offered at NADA. For the American students, it is also a learning experience, as it allows them an opportunity to understand more about people from other parts of the world.

Some students, like senior Kenny Loeber, do not have to make much of an adjustment in order to get along with their room-

mates.

Loeber is from Texas, but went to school in England last year. He says NADA is not much different than his experiences in England.

"Two of my roommates are English, as well as many of the people who live in my building, so I find we have a lot to talk about and a lot in common,"

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David Riding

hard to keep up with it."

David Riding, a junior from York, England, agrees and says he dislikes the grading system used in America.

"In England, if you make a 75 on something, it's equivalent to an A and you're quite happy with it. Here, you have to make a 90 or better and it really is a lot harder to do well."

Both Riding and Abbey say the positives outweigh the negatives, and they are enjoying their experience.

Both agree the best part so far has been the friends they have made. They say that being paired with American students has been very interesting, and they have found they share many common likes and dislikes with them.

"It's quite amusing to see that we have the same tastes in music, movies and television that they do here. There are some songs and musical artists who I thought were big only in England and it's surprising to find they were big here as well," Riding says.

Loeber says.

It is the task of the American students to help the internationals assimilate into the country and to explain the customs Americans have which may seem strange to them.

Loeber does not mind this because he says he knows what it's like to be "a stranger in a strange land."

Overall, everyone benefits from NADA. The American students learn what people are like outside the country, the internationals get to visit a different part of the world and receive education abroad, and everyone learns something about themselves which they probably did not know before.

Diana Campillo, a junior from Mexico, sums it up best:

"NADA is a place where people from many different countries all live under one roof. There are conflicts from time to time, but overall, everyone gets along very well and learns a lot from each other. NADA is how the world should be."

Condom pros, cons important to know

Health Beat
by Karla Fulmer

There was a time when people used condoms only because they feared an unwanted pregnancy. Today people use condoms because they fear death.

The peace movement brought women's and minority rights issues, groovy clothes and birth control pills, the sixties and a new concern—the fear of catching a sexually transmitted disease, or STD.

Condoms are an effective form of birth control and a good way to prevent many STDs. When a latex condom is used properly, it is 90-98 percent effective.

Latex is important because it is a barrier to bacteria, viruses and other small organisms. Animal skin condoms can allow these organisms to pass through the condom's pores and infect partners.

Last year at USC more than 1,200 students were treated for STDs, requiring more than 2,000 visits to the Thomson Student Health Center.

Most new cases of STDs occur in people 18-34 years old.

The most common STDs today, unlike those in the sixties and seventies, are caused by viruses which spread rapidly and are incurable.

The most common STDs at USC are chlamydia, venereal warts and herpes. However, other STDs include hepatitis B, gonorrhea, syphilis and HIV/AIDS. There have been confirmed cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed on the USC campus.

Most STDs spread through contact with skin and body fluids such as semen, vaginal secretions and blood. STDs are rarely spread through saliva.

Condoms are important because they prevent contact with these body fluids. However, a person can contract STDs such as herpes or warts even while using a condom because condoms don't cover all the areas that can be infected by these diseases. Any contact with an open sore increases the risk of getting an STD.

For further protection against STDs, a spermicide containing 4 percent nonoxynol-9 should be used. This concentration of nonoxynol-9 has been shown to kill sperm as well as bacteria and viruses that are sexually transmitted. It is also thought to kill the HIV/AIDS virus, but this has not been proved.

Condoms should be kept at room temperature away from sources of friction, such as back pockets or wallets.

Latex condoms are preferable, and should be used according to the directions on the package.

Buy condoms made in America because these are the only ones that are scientifically checked for quality.

It is important to leave some room at the tip of the condom so it won't break.

Never use an oil-based lubricant such as Crisco, Vaseline, or other lotions or moisturizers. They cause condoms to break in a matter of seconds.

Remember abstinence is the only safe sex, but safe sex can be practiced very easily if the partners are well-informed and willing to protect themselves.

If you would like more information, call or drop by the Open Door Health and Wellness Center. There are trained professionals and Peer Sexuality Educators there to help you as well as information on contraception and STDs.

If you have painful bumps, pain during urination, itching, rash, or discharge, and you think you have an STD, please make an appointment at the Thomson Student Health Center.

Buffett's second book too long, needs better plot, less aliens

By CHRIS MULDROW
Staff Writer

Jimmy Buffett calls his new book a "novel take," and novel it certainly is.

In fact, some would say *Where is Joe Merchant?* transcends the bounds of novelty and plunges headfirst into the world of silliness and foolishness.

Buffett, the singer/songwriter who has recorded 19 albums and written a book of short stories and two "children's" books, decided to

write a rather long fairy tale about a seaplane pilot who gets caught up in the search for Joe Merchant, a rock and roll singer who supposedly faked his death (a la Elvis).

Unfortunately, Buffett is a bit more accustomed to weaving tiny little yarns that take up three or four minutes of cassette player time (complete with the Coral Reefers playing guitar and harmonica accompaniment).

With 382 pages to fill with a

BOOK REVIEW
Where is Joe Merchant?
Jimmy Buffett ★★

single tale, his writing loses its hip, carefree feel and becomes disjointed, strange and, well, kind of stupid.

Just about every character has his or her life threatened at least once and is saved by freak weather, a hidden stowaway, or a lucky seaplane flyby.

Two characters heal themselves with a mystical crystal wand, the lead character is sidetracked in Cuba because Fidel Castro wants to fly his Grumman Goose seaplane, and the chief villain concocts his evil plans on his personal roller skating rink.

The book's first couple of chapters makes it seem like a realistic tale of life in the Caribbean, but it quickly dissolves into a fantasy world of aliens and Captain Hooks and then whirlpools into an unrecognizable mush of silly side stories.

The book's saving grace is a wealth of very interesting, well-

developed characters.

Only Jimmy Buffett could create people like Desdemona, a hippie survivor whose goal in life is to turn a boat made out of old airplane fuselage into a spaceship, called the Cosmic Muffin.

Other notable characters include Blanton Meyercord, a fishing guide who snaps when Jet Skiers ruin his fishing glats; Meyercord ends up blowing up several Jet Skis and spends most of the book hiding from Rudy Breno, a sleazy tabloid journalist.

Of course, wonderfully developed characters are fine and dandy, but they have to be doing something of note to make a good story.

They do not really do that in this "novel tale."

The final verdict on *Where is Joe Merchant?*: Jimmy Buffett fans will enjoy the bizarre story of life in the islands and recognize his love for eccentric, stranger characters.

Most other readers would do better picking up *Tales From Margaritaville*, Buffett's collection of short stories.

He can be an excellent storyteller, but only in short soundbytes.

Religious studies professor encourages class discussion

Professor Profile

by Stephen Brown

Alonzo Johnson, a professor in the religion department, shares the insight he has gained from an extensive background through interactive discussion with his students.

In his second year at USC, Johnson is teaching "Religion in America" and the "African American Religious Experience" along with graduate courses in twentieth century christology and nineteenth century evangelical thoughts.

He will teach a new class called "Liberation Theology" next semester which will focus on black and feminist teachings.

A native of Goose Creek, S.C., and son of a minister, Johnson grew up around black religious traditions. As a child he was exposed to tent meetings, revivals and the evangelical culture of the South.

In the 1980s, Johnson had the opportunity to "step back into religious and world history" by participating in two traveling seminars, one to Africa and another to the Holy Land.

As he visited such countries as Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, he studied how Christian institutions of the Third World were participating in the development process.

In the Holy Land, Johnson saw a large group of military men around the supposed spot of Christ's crucifixion.

"I couldn't help but feel the significance of history in context of the Middle East military situation," Johnson said. "These people live with death and destruction every day. They don't have the luxury of reflection. The political struggle against the powers of oppression somehow made the concept of crucifixion real."

Before he came to USC, Johnson taught at Benedict College and at Claflin College, his alma mater. He attended the Union Theological Seminary in New York, attaining the professional master of divinity degree, a master of sacred theology advanced religious degree, and a Ph.D. in systematic theology, the study of religious thought with an emphasis on contemporary situations.

"Since I was 18 years old, I knew I wanted to experience the give and take of the classroom," he says. "The human interaction is what gets me up in the morning."

Johnson says he believes students grow when wrestling with frustrating ideas. Dealing with current and ethical issues in a critical way is a constant source of learning.

"Ideally, a small class which allows for intimacy between the teacher, the students and each other is best," he says. "I structure my lectures so I can elicit student response as an integral part of the

learning experience rather than an appendage to the material."

More than anything, Johnson hopes his students, like himself, will discover a job which they truly want to do. In troubled times of career frustration, the greatest reward is the satisfaction of finding something you love to do and making a living in that field.

Johnson's father continues to be an inspiration to him.

"We are continually challenged by the proposition of intellectual life making a real difference to people," he said. "In few other disciplines do we have the opportunity to make the connection with struggling conditions of people in society."

Johnson is impressed with the work of churches in the aftermath of the Los Angeles riots.

"I am particularly concerned about seeing how churches rally around current issues such as AIDS and drug awareness," he said. "It is important for churches to reach beyond the pulpit through various creative programs."

Johnson is putting finishing touches on a book based on his graduate work about the late Howard Thurman, a prolific writer and black theologian and the first African American dean at Boston University.

Johnson is also planning a 300-level special topics course for next year which will be open to all students. He hopes the class will open even more students' minds to the aspects of contemporary religion



Religious Studies professor Alonzo Johnson always knew he wanted to teach. Kelly Johnson/The Gamecock