

APARTMENT FOLLIES: menacing mice, popcorn meals

by Robin Pilus

Apartment dwellers attending UNL may suffer from hunger now and then, but as a whole they are content with their off-campus life style.

More and more UNL students are turning to off-campus living. Seniors, Leigh Roeder, Vickie Nissen and Mary Runge share a three-bedroom apartment on the upper level of a house.

Before they moved into their present apartment, they were temporarily living in a trailer.

"We looked for a furnished apartment at a reasonable price, but they were all dumps," Roeder said.

According to Roeder, the landlord did not let them move into the trailer they had signed a contract for, but put them in one "not near as nice and costing much more money."

"We kept bugging her, and she kept putting us off. It was a bad situation, but now the lady does not rent to college students," Roeder said.

Getting their present apartment was described by Roeder as being "near heaven."

One of the apartment's major plusses is a brick fireplace in the living room.

"We were really excited about the fireplace," Nissen said. "We could just imagine curling up by the fire on cold



winter nights. When we first tried it, the smoke wouldn't go up the draft and it all came out into the apartment."

"The whole place smelled like smoke for weeks," she added.

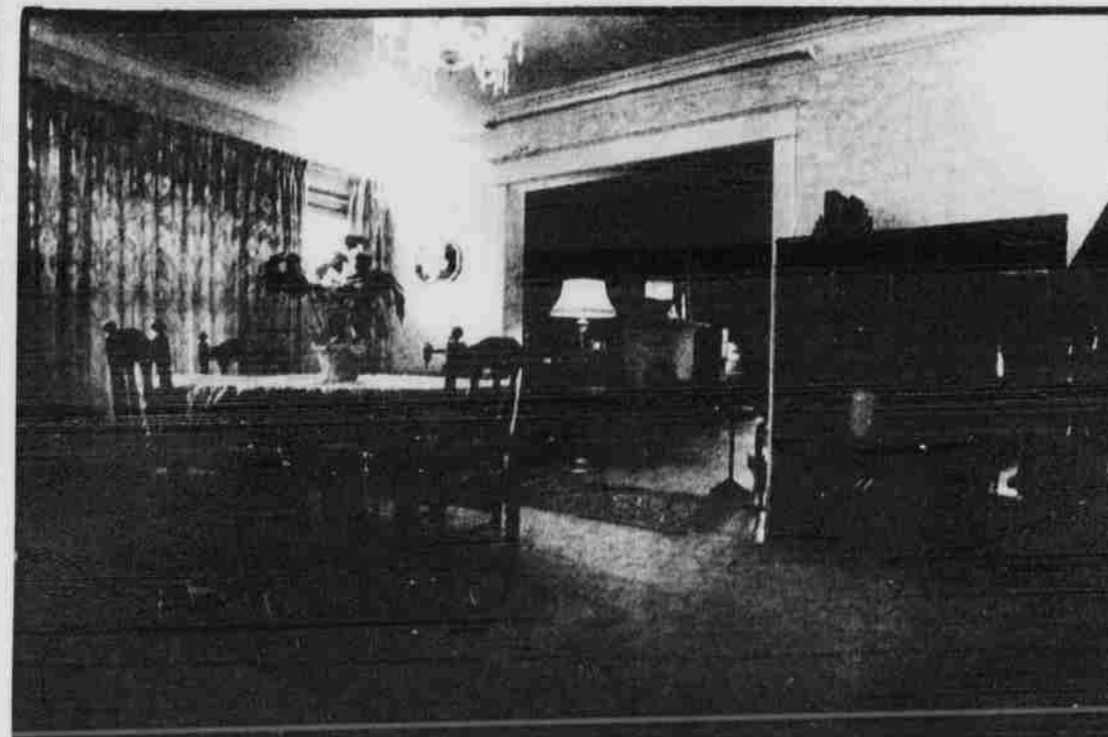
One might think that three college women would cook foods fit for a gourmet.

"We all like different foods," Nissen said. "Mary and I ate nothing but cereal three meals a day when we first moved in."

Roeder estimates that the three of them have eaten together about 10 times during the school year.

The one problem of apartment living, Roeder said, is "trying to remember to buy toilet paper before we run out."

Gary Puncochar and Gary Braun, two UNL juniors live close to campus in an unfurnished apartment.



"The worst part about this place," Puncochar said, "is that it doesn't have a shower. Baths take too long."

Braun added that the storm windows have to be nailed down or they "flop around in the wind."

Puncochar, a former dormitory resident, said that he hated everything about residence halls.

"I finally decided to move out when the fire alarm got pulled every night for a week at 3 a.m.," he said.

Puncochar said that they were plagued by bugs in his apartment. "I don't know what they are. They're too big to be called cockroaches."

Up to now, two mice have been caught on the Braun-Puncochar residence.

"They were really kind of cute," Puncochar said. "They looked just like the ones that are on cartoons."

In order to rid the apartment of the rodents, two methods were employed.

First, Braun and Puncochar chased them around the kitchen with a broom. "They'd stand on the bricks we placed in front of their holes and just look at us," Braun said.

"Finally though," Puncochar claimed, "they succumbed to the old, cheese-in-the-trap trick."

One major advantage of living in an apartment, according to Puncochar, is that one can have pets. Puncochar's dog just had a litter of nine.

Although he slept on the couch the first few days after they were born, "the puppies are really no trouble," said Puncochar.

"D.J. (the puppies mother) seems to take care of everything. I just had to get used to their whinning."

More privacy and freedom are major reasons given by Puncochar and Braun for living off-campus.

Eating is the biggest hassle of apartment life, according to Braun. "We eat at McDonald's once a day and consume lots of popcorn and eggs."

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