

Rental is option for students needing food, relaxation

By Kim Wilt

Tired of watching Channels 7 and 8 at the same time? Is the taste of warm beer beginning to ruin your taste-buds? If your TV needs to be fixed, but you can't stand the thought of Saturday without *Saturday Night Live*, or if you need a chilly place to put the Coors, consider renting.

consumer byline

Dorm-livers have long been able to rent refrigerators for the school year through companies with a student representative on campus. This year's company is Collegiate Products Inc., from Tulsa, Okla.

John Meisinger, a junior industrial education major, is the student representative, who "works like a middleman between the student and Tulsa."

Meisinger has two sizes of refrigerators to rent—the 4.4

cubic feet size, and the smaller one, which is a little over 2 cubic feet.

Deposit needed

The larger refrigerators rent for \$61.34 a year, which includes a deposit, and sales tax, Meisinger said. The smaller units cost \$45.14 to rent, including tax and deposit.

Demand apparently is high for refrigerators, because Meisinger said only large ones are left for renting.

Ace Furniture-TV, 2429 O Street, also rents refrigerators, and "anything for the home," according to its Yellow Page advertisement. A clerk at the store said the prices and rates of payment "vary with the merchandise."

Refrigerators, for example, can be rented either by the month or for the entire school year. The monthly rental for a 3.2 cubic foot refrigerator is \$9.95 plus tax or \$60 yearly. A 4.5 cubic foot refrigerator costs \$14.50 a month or \$75 a year.

Weekly or monthly

Television sets can either be rented weekly or monthly and are either black and white or color portables, the clerk said. The 12-inch sets cost either \$14.50 per month or \$8.50 per week. The 19-inch black and white sets cost \$18.50 per month or \$10.30 per week, she said. The color

sets rent for a rate of \$15 per week, or \$30 per month. "We rent a lot of TVs to people whose sets are being fixed," the clerk said.

A cleaning deposit is required on all merchandise, which depends on the size and amount of equipment rented, she said.

If a TV set or refrigerator, or any other appliance, is stolen while it is rented, the renter is responsible for the purchase price.

Rent or buy

It is possible to rent equipment with an option to buy it. Ace has a "30-day purchase option," the clerk said.

Renters have the first 30 days to decide if they want to buy the television or refrigerator. If they decide to buy, the rental contract is torn up and the money paid is applied to a purchase contract.

Cari TV and Appliance is another store where rent-to-own is possible.

"If they rent for 21 months, they own it," the store's bookkeeper said, although renters can decide at any time that they want to buy the merchandise.

Small refrigerators are sold, not rented, at Cari, for a price of \$69 or \$79, depending on the size. Either 3.2 cubic foot, or 2.5 cubic foot refrigerators are available.

Portable televisions are rented monthly. Sixteen-inch black and white sets cost \$14.50 per month, without deposit and the first month paid in advance. The color sets are 19-inches and rent for \$39.90 per month, also with no deposit and the first month paid in advance, the bookkeeper said.

Responsible if stolen

As with Ace, renters are responsible for the purchase price of any rented equipment stolen while it is rented.


Both Ace and Cari require the renter to fill out an "information sheet," which asks for name, address, phone number, and other information of the renter. In addition, Ace asks for credit references, such as Master Charge, Visa, or a bank reference if a renter does not have credit cards.

"We want make sure that people do take their bills seriously, and will pay us," the clerk at Ace said.

Cari does not ask for credit references, but will verify the information given to them. For example, they will check with a landlord, to make sure that the renter does live in the apartment that he claimed he did.

This column, which will appear every Friday, is intended to be a consumer column, from the student's point of view. In order to write a fairly relevant column (in order to write a column at all), I'm going to need ideas on what to write about. Any and all (well, most) suggestions are welcomed, so send them to the *Daily Nebraskan*, or call me there, and let me know where you spend your money.

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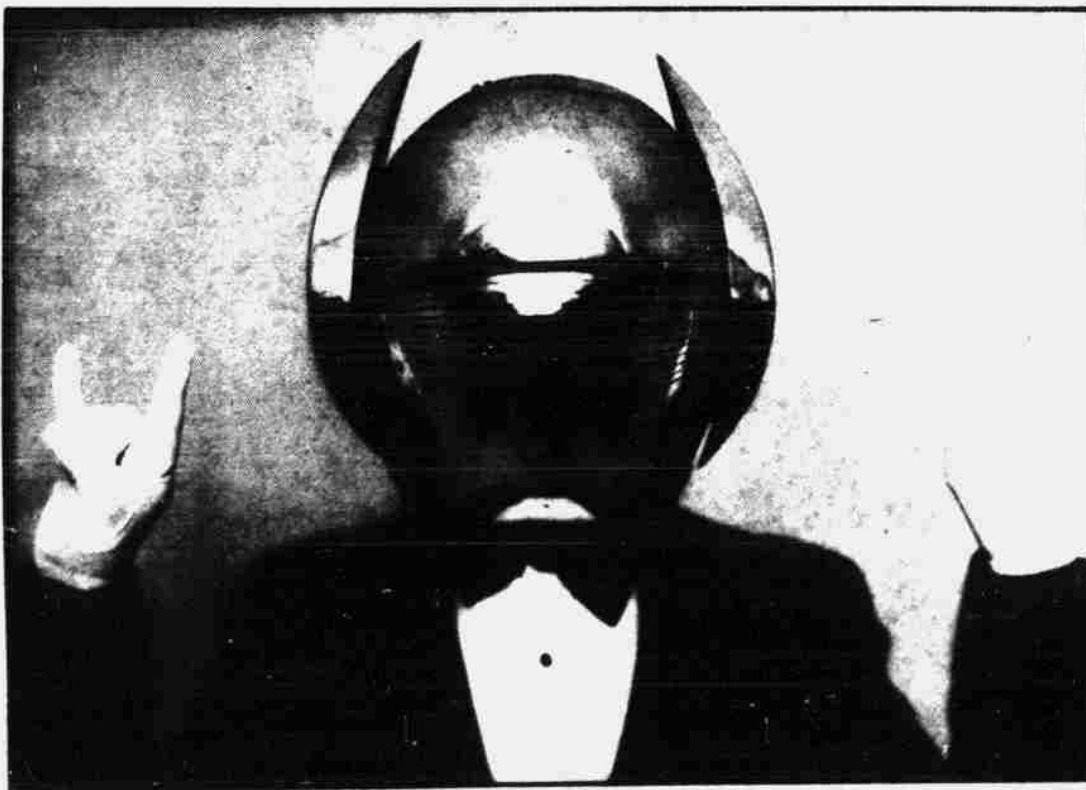
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