

Bizarre disasters abound during spring break

■ Not every vacation is perfect, but some students have had worse-than-average experiences

By Devon Karr
for the Emerald

No matter how glamorous the intended spring break vacation spot, something can always go wrong, and the trip that was supposed to be relaxing turns into a huge disaster.

Unfortunately, tragedy can strike even if the trip has been planned for months or if it's a spontaneous road trip. Three students at the University have had unlucky experiences during their spring vacations.

Car trouble, a company's scam and being in the wrong place at the wrong time turned these students' spring breaks into nightmares. Two years ago, Chris Senden and his friend were two days into their five-day camping trip at Breiton-

bush River. While driving fast on an icy road in the mountains, they slid off the road and hit some trees.

"The car was not quite totaled, but salvageable," said Senden, who had to walk 20 miles to get help. "My dad flipped out, and I was busted big time. I was almost exiled from the family."

A car accident did not stop Senden from taking another road trip last year to Lake Havasu, Ariz. On the way, his transmission went out in Yreka, Calif., and he was forced to hitchhike a ride into town.

The mechanics had to order a part for his car, which took two days to deliver.

"We ended up coming home early and painted houses," Senden said. "We were going to be living the high life at Lake Havasu — but no."

Lucinda Jurden and her friend planned on going to Mazatlan, Mexico, through a company called Sun Tours for spring break two

years ago. She called a travel agent and gave out her credit card number.

"After this, we didn't really hear from the travel agent," Jurden said. "Then I called to check on the or-

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Chris Senden
University student »

der a week before we went, and they said everything should be fine for us to leave."

A few days later, her dad informed her that they hadn't charged the credit card, and consequently, her mother called the

travel agency. The travel agency didn't have any record of anything being faxed from Sun Tours, and they didn't know why.

"Two days before we were supposed to leave, the travel agent called back and said they didn't have our tickets or anything," Jurden said. "I was mad at the company and disappointed because I had been planning on it for over a month."

Jurden changed her spring break plans and went to Canada.

When she returned, she saw a story on the news saying there were hundreds of people stranded at the airport with phony tickets to Mexico.

Although Katie Bergerson actually made it through her vacation to San Clemente, Calif., things still went wrong.

"There were several disasters during the trip," Bergerson said.

After spending the entire day at Disneyland, Bergerson and her

friends went to Burger King a few miles down the road. "The man at the drive-through window had only given us our drinks when my friend in the back seat starts screaming go, go, get out of here," Bergerson said. "All of the sudden, the guy at the window starts locking it up and motioning for us to leave."

Bergerson found out later that the Burger King was being robbed inside.

"Looking back on it, we should have seen some of the signs because there were some sketchy people around the parking lot," Bergerson said. "It was a really scary experience."

A few days later, Bergerson and her friends were driving to the train station when they witnessed a car accident.

"The car in front of us got T-boned in the intersection," Bergerson said. "We ended up calling 911 for the second time on our trip."

The right resources render best break for a budget

■ The Outdoor Program and various Web sites provide ideas to help keep vacation costs at a minimum

By Hank Hager
for the Emerald

It has been only about a month since Winter Break, but the thoughts of spring break are already on the minds of students. Daytona Beach, Mexico and Jamaica are just a few of the many places that will be occupied by thousands of college students come this March.

Fun in the sun is the main goal of these students, but this can also make a nice dent in their checkbooks. There are many alternatives to spending a whole lot this spring, and there are many places to help out students.

"If you want to go somewhere sunny, it takes effort," said Dan

Geiger, the director of the Outdoor Program. "But it can also be a great vacation for adventure."

For spring break ideas, students on a budget can go to the Outdoor Program's office located in the EMU basement. The Program offers activities such as river rafting, hiking and climbing.

"Every spring break there are usually seven to ten trips, and one big river trip," said Outdoor Program Director Dan Geiger. Most spots for planned trips fill up by late February, so interested students should act quickly, Geiger said.

He added that the program enables students to plan trips on their own, so they can limit costs and do it their way.

Those who do not mind spending a little more money can plan a trip involving an airfare. Finding discounts takes time but on-line booking has made it more convenient.

Web-Sites are now becoming more popular with travel, and can sometimes offer the best rates. What is even more important about these sites is that students can gain advice to just about anything they want to know. Whether they want to travel to Jamaica or New York, they can find out what the best restaurants are, where the parties are, or even where to stay.

One such site is collegeclub.com where students can research trips and other things to do during spring break.

The site is affiliated with Student Universe, an online travel agency. Members can gain valuable discounts on flights, sometimes as much as \$200 to \$300.

To make it even better, the site works with charter companies that are reliable, said Andrew Arias, a collegeclub.com representative.

"Students should not have any problems with Student Universe," Arias said.

Many students use the break to return home and visit with friends.

Emily Gaskey is a freshman from Sweet Home, Ore. and plans to



Rebecca Wilson Emerald

Hiking in one of Oregon's ancient forests makes for an inexpensive spring break.

make the short trip to the coast.

"Since we are all pretty much poor college students that cannot afford to go to Mexico or Florida over the break, we decided to ven-

ture to the nice, cool and windy Oregon coast," Gaskey said. "It will be a good time for us to catch up on what has been happening and it will be like old times again."

Nominations announced for SAGA

By David Germain
AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood actors seem as divided as everyone else about the year's top movies.

Five different movies, including Golden Globe winners "Gladiator" and "Almost Famous," took three nominations apiece Tuesday for the Screen Actors Guild awards.

The others were the political drama "The Contender," the French fairy tale "Chocolat" and the British dance flick "Billy Elliot."

Three films — the legal saga "Erin Brockovich," the Marquis de Sade drama "Quills" and the drug-war thriller "Traffic" — received two nominations apiece.

The SAG nominations are the last major awards announcement before Oscar nominations Feb. 13. Unlike most years, no one film has emerged as an Oscar front-runner. A year ago, eventual Oscar champ "American Beauty" dominated the SAG nominations with four nods.

Earlier this month, the Golden Globes, too, were spread among a variety of films.

Nominated by SAG for their overall casts this year were "Almost Famous," "Billy Elliot,"

"Chocolat," "Gladiator" and "Traffic."

Picked for best female actor were: Joan Allen, "The Contender"; Juliette Binoche, "Chocolat"; Ellen Burstyn, "Requiem for a Dream"; Laura Linney, "You Can Count On Me"; and Julia Roberts, "Erin Brockovich."

Male actor nominees were: Jamie Bell, "Billy Elliot"; Russell Crowe, "Gladiator"; Benicio Del Toro, "Traffic"; Tom Hanks, "Cast Away"; and Geoffrey Rush, "Quills."

For supporting female actor, the contenders are: Judi Dench, "Chocolat"; Kate Hudson, "Almost Famous"; Frances McDormand, "Almost Famous"; Julie Walters, "Billy Elliot"; and Kate Winslet, "Quills."

Nominees for male supporting actor were: Jeff Bridges, "The Contender"; Willem Dafoe, "Shadow of the Vampire"; Albert Finney, "Erin Brockovich"; Gary Oldman, "The Contender"; and Joaquin Phoenix, "Gladiator."

SAG's awards have been fairly accurate in predicting the eventual Oscar winners for lead actor and actress. Ten of the 12 past SAG winners in top movie acting cate-

gories went on to capture Academy Awards.

The guild also picked nominees in eight television categories. Among top contenders are "Ally McBeal" and "Will & Grace," which received four nominations each, and "ER," "The Sopranos," "The West Wing" and "Frasier," with three nods apiece.


"Chocolat's" Dench also received a nomination for female actor in a TV movie or miniseries for "The Last of the Blonde Bombshells."

Alec Baldwin and Brian Cox both were nominated for best male actor in a TV movie or miniseries for "Nuremberg." "Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman" also had two TV movie or miniseries nods, Brian Dennehy for male actor and Elizabeth Franz for female actor.

SAG will present its seventh annual awards March 11 in a ceremony airing on TNT.

The show will include the guild's lifetime achievement honor, for husband-wife acting team Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee.


The guild's nominations are chosen by 4,200 randomly selected members of the union. The union's full membership of 98,000 is eligible to vote.



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