Spring 2009

Fusion Spring 2009

Kristine Gill
Brittany Moseley
Kelly Pickerel
Christina Stavale
Ben Wolford

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kent.edu/fusion

Part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Gill, Kristine; Moseley, Brittany; Pickerel, Kelly; Stavale, Christina; Wolford, Ben; Wright, Denise; Husted, Simon; and Scanes, Sara, "Fusion Spring 2009" (2009). Fusion. 11.
https://digitalcommons.kent.edu/fusion/11

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Kent State Student Media at Digital Commons @ Kent State University Libraries. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fusion by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Kent State University Libraries. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kent.edu.
A SNEAK PEAK AT OHIO’S PRIDE
WHAT’S GOING ON THIS SUMMER AS WE COMMEMORATE THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STONEWALL RIOTS

PLUS
THE ECONOMY SUCKS, BUT YOUR WARDROBE DOESN’T HAVE TO

A GUIDE TO WATCH ‘MILK’

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT
IT’S A NEW CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, AND ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

NO, RAY’S NOT GAY

“YOU HAVE TO SOMETIMES THINK ABOUT WHO YOU ARE. AT FIRST I WAS LIKE, ‘OH MAN WHAT WILL PEOPLE THINK ABOUT ME?’ YOU DON’T PASS UP AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE YOUR STORY.” — RAY CAMPBELL
We congratulate Fusion Magazine for its contribution to the literary arts in our communities.

PFLAG Cleveland
2332 Delaware Drive
Cleveland Heights, OH 44106
Information Line: (216) 556-1701
www.pflagcleveland.org

Monthly meetings, 7:30 PM
2nd Tuesday, Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland

Monthly Support Group,
The Next Step Group &
Straight Spouse Network

PFLAG Akron
PO Box 5471
Akron, OH 44113
(330) 342-5825

Monthly meetings, 7:00 PM
3rd Thursday, North Springfield
Presbyterian church
671 Canton Road
pflagakron.org

PFLAG National
1101 14th Street NW, Suite 1030
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 638-4200
pflagakron.org
e-mail: info@pflag.org

PFLAG-AKRON
Helping families in the Akron area since 1982.

PFLAG-CLEVELAND
Helping families in the Greater Cleveland area since 1985.

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends through:

Support To cope with an adverse society.

Education To enlighten an ill-informed public.

Advocacy To end discrimination and secure equal rights.

PFLAG CLEVELAND & AKRON are recognized as 501 (c) 3 organizations; your gifts are tax deductible and greatly appreciated.
**SPECIAL REPORT**

**4 A NEW FACE FOR CHANGE**
As California continues to wrestle over Proposition 8, and both Vermont and Iowa legalize same-sex marriage, it’s clear this generation has found its single most defining civil rights battle. And it’s a fight many believe is just getting started.

**FRONT PAGES**

**9 TAKING THE FINAL STEPS FOR DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS**
Relief and frustration collide as the reality and snags of domestic partner benefits set in at KSU.

**11 WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER TO FEEL THE PRIDE?**
Good thing there’s plenty to choose from as Ohio cities prepare for the annual summer celebration.

**13 MOBILIZING AKRON’S GAY COMMUNITY, GRANT BY GRANT**
“We’ve just become part of the city, just like anyone else,” says Christopher Hixson, Gay Community Endowment Fund.

**14 A FAMILIAR BATTLE, FOUGHT CLOSER TO HOME THIS TIME**
Cleveland’s domestic partner registry activists and church groups spar over May’s opening.

**17 ALL THE LITTLE THINGS THERE ARE TO KNOW ABOUT ‘MILK’**
There’s so much more to the Harvey Milk story than Gus Van Sant could ever cram into 2 hours.

**20 NEW LGBT MOVIES YOU’VE NEVER SEEN + A FEW YOU NEVER SHOULD**
Reviews of nine LGBT-themed flicks from March’s Cleveland International Film Festival.

**ON THE COVER**

**29 EVERYONE LOVES RAY (CAMPBELL)** “There are so many rumors about Ray Campbell out there. Half of them are true, and half of them I’ve made up.”

**PERSPECTIVES**

**22 HOW I WENT TO THE GYM TO COME OUT OF THE CLOSET**
Simon Husted describes his struggle with his weight and how it kept him unsure of acceptance.

**FEATURE**

**32 THE GUYS OF DELTA LAMBDA PHI**
How Kent State’s chapter of this progressive group is so much more than “the gay fraternity.”

**FASHION**

**34 BE CHEAP WITHOUT LOOKIN’ IT**
Our take on how to look the best while spending less and supporting area and regional economies.

**LAST THOUGHTS**

**44 ONE COLLEGE GIRL’S HUNT FOR ETERNAL LOVE – WITH A GAY MAN**
When Sara Scanes left her high school love (gay), she knew she needed a new soulmate (also gay).

**2 CONTACT US**

**3 FROM THE EDITORS**

**COVER PHOTO** of Ray Campbell shot by Daniel R. Doherty.
According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, fusion is "a merging of diverse, distinct or separate elements into a unified whole." Fusion magazine addresses sexual minority issues within the general university population. The magazine strives to unify people of different backgrounds through education and awareness.

MISSION

Support Student Media at Kent State University and Fusion magazine by making a tax-deductible donation. Donations can be sent to the address below, payable to Fusion magazine. Also, subscriptions are available for $10/year (two issues). Send an e-mail to kentfusion@gmail.com for more information.

CONTACT US

Fusion magazine thanks the Gay Community Endowment Fund of the Akron Community Foundation for its continual financial support.
There's a lot of poetic justice if you compare the state mottoes of those who've legalized same-sex marriage to those who vocally oppose it. Iowans prize their liberties and maintain their rights, while Californians claim to have found “it.” Those in Vermont exalt “freedom and unity,” though the state's governor may not be on the same page, while we Ohioans submit that: “With God, all things are possible.”

Of course there are the marked opposites. Those in Massachusetts seek peace, “but peace only under liberty.” While “the people rule” in Arkansas, our fellow Americans in Florida simply trust in God.

When it’s evident through mere comparison of trivial expressions we live in a nation quite divided, it’s not so hard to acknowledge the differences that divide Americans. It’s our inherited history to want to be divided. But taking legal strides to ensure equal rights along the lines of gender and race has been socially acceptable for decades.

The blurring of those lines – making it harder for those who want to regulate the divides – is what this issue of Fusion is all about. In Akron, the Gay Community Endowment Fund is expanding awareness. In Cleveland, a domestic partner registry is set to open in May.

Here at Kent State, staff and faculty enjoy domestic partner benefits. And, I know, we even put a straight frat guy on the cover – because an ally with a story is an ally with a story no matter the movement.

If we only follow along the lines we're born onto, we make no progress. We are united through our division, and whether it is in the depths of the south or along the border at our north, it’s impossible to stand united without being true to yourself and true to those in you life.

Change is still coming to America. Legislature by legislature. Ballot by ballot. If you give up and accept less than your rights, you’re just as un-American as those who want to deny them to you.


Grow up Catholic in North Jersey in the ’90s, we just didn’t talk about gay rights. I first became aware of the movement as a teenager, when we moved to Ohio and I made my first gay friend, John. I didn't know John all that well, but I remember him telling me about coming out to his friends and family, how his younger brother didn’t want to be alone with him, how classmates treated him in the halls.

I distinctly remember being profoundly saddened by the idea that John would be denied the things I took for granted about my future – getting married, having kids, being accepted by family and peers, living safely – simply because of the people he loved. When Nov. 2004 rolled around, I cursed the fact that I wouldn’t be 18 and watched as ignorance and hate won out over what I knew to be right: Our government was based on the idea of granting freedom, not taking it away.

I desperately, desperately wanted to be a part of something that could right that wrong. So I became involved in politics, the Daily Kent Stater and eventually this magazine.

Adam and I drove to Cleveland to see “Milk” in December, and I left the theater with an intense, unyielding desire to work like never before for equality. And it hit me. Harvey Milk was known for saying: “If they know us, they don’t vote against us.”

In Fusion’s short history, it has lived up to that challenge. It serves not only as an outlet for the LGBT community and its allies but tells the stories of the people within it – the people who, whether by waving banners or quietly living their lives out of the closet, take Harvey Milk’s legacy and run with it.

In this issue, we learn about a fraternity that focuses on inclusion and acceptance, films that feature the experiences of those who are LGBT, and last but not least, the undying lessons Milk taught us. In my mind, this issue is dedicated to him, and to the countless others who came before and after him to work tirelessly so that love and equality know no boundaries.

Here’s to another five years (and more and more) of trying to be a voice so that someday everyone will know the story of someone who’s LGBT.
SPECIAL REPORT

A NEW FACE FOR CHANGE

>> The story of the modern civil rights movement

PHOTO: LEIGH ALVAREZ, UCLA DAILY BRUIN
Jesus wants you to vote NO on H8!
BY BEN WOLFORD

“Brigham Young was married 52 times! I just need once!”

A Proposition 8 protester paraded a sign with those words around downtown Houston Nov. 15. The Houston demonstration was one of scores that day in all 50 states, Canada, England and Australia, speaking out against the California vote to ban same-sex marriage.

Photographers were there, too, taking thousands of pictures of thousands of signs and thousands of faces. Hordes of people filled streets in a First Amendment fashion not seen supporting an American civil rights movement since the ‘60s.

To scan the millions of images on a Google search of “Proposition 8 protests” is sharply captivating. There are mad, screaming faces with bulging neck muscles. There are faces surrounded by police in riot gear. There are contemplative, quiet faces. There are kissing faces.

But can they all be the face of this fresh, re-energized gay rights movement?

“That’s a good question,” says Molly Temple, a University of California at Los Angeles student who’s been active in opposing Prop. 8. “I think that there is a certain amount of unity, but I think maybe if we were to collect a little more and create a larger force, there could be more of a visible movement. There are a lot of little things popping up in different communities.”

But at least people are angry.

That’s what long-time activist Fred Karger says. “I’m glad we lost. We needed that wake-up call.”

The call came courtesy of 52 percent of Golden State voters who passed Prop. 8.

“I think I was shocked and hurt but not terribly surprised,” says Peter Carley, counselor in residence at the LGBT resource center at UCLA. “It was a majority voting on a minority right, and I think in this case people generally voted from fear rather than knowledge.”

The atmosphere at UCLA’s campus Nov. 5 was gloom mixed with hope, Carley says. “The students were really active, really engaged and really devastated … There was kind of an emotional and moral exhaustion. Although it was a bittersweet moment because, you know, the Barack thing was great. There was finally someone reasonably progressive in the White House.”

Temple saw a similar reaction — people weren’t happy.

“There was a lot of disappointment and devastation and not to mention a bunch of protests,” says Temple, a second-year world arts and culture student. “Some demonstrations ended up happening at or around UCLA where students were involved. I went to a couple.”

The reactive protests at UCLA were just a sample of something bigger, a collective barrage of independent revolts. It was obvious from the headlines: “Police, demonstrators clash at Prop. 8 protest,” which the Los Angeles Times ran the next day. The San Francisco Chronicle reported people marching on city halls across the country Nov. 15.

But even those were warning shots for the campaigns in the works.
Karger has campaigned for gay rights since about the time Harvey Milk, the late San Francisco city supervisor who was the first open elected to public office in the United States, was assassinated in 1978, and he says he’s never seen a surge of involvement like there is now.

Karger himself went for the throat with his group, Californians Against Hate. They dug up public records of how much money individuals and firms gave to yes-on-Prop.-8 campaigns. A commercial on the group’s Web site introduces a white-haired woman and the text, “Elsa Prince of Holland, Michigan gave $450,000 to eliminate same-sex marriage in California.” Then a little boy tossing a baseball looks up to ask, “Why did you give so much money, grandma?”

“My goal was to make it socially unacceptable to take away the rights of a minority,” Karger says. But the more common tactic, it seems, is to make it socially acceptable to be that minority.

Equality California came up with the idea of tell-three.org in response to the passage of Prop. 8. The aim of the campaign is to get gays and lesbians to tell three non-LGBT people about their lives.

“Yes, the fifteen-year-olds of this country are overwhelmingly supportive of our rights,” the Tell 3 Web site reads. “But if we don’t want to wait around for today’s teenagers to become middle-aged before we get equality, we’re going to have to get more people to support us.”

Similarly, Temple and other UCLA students created multimedia stories that look intimately into gay and lesbian couples’ lives and posted them at 13lovestories.com. “I think I fell in love at first sight,” says Maribeth in Temple’s audio slideshow, “Jean & Maribeth.”

“One of the problems that we recognized in the ‘No on Prop. 8 Campaign’ was that there were no actual faces shown, no actual stories shown, or LGBT families or people in the community,” Temple says. “And so (13 Love Stories) is kind of putting a face to this issue.”

Rights activists in Ohio show the face in a different sense.

“College and university students who believe in equality issues for (LGBT) Ohio are registering student teams with us and committing to design and participate in public service projects in their community,” says Peter Caborn, deputy director for Equality Ohio. “So, for example, a team of students from Kent State could register a CAUSE team with us and let us know that they have the intent of donating 10 hours a week to the animal shelter.”

CAUSE stands for College and University Students for Equality. Caborn says the project, which so far has no Kent State volunteers, aims to show Ohioans gay and lesbian citizens “are giving back to their community no less than other people,” as they push for, among other things, equal housing and employment legislation.

All the activism must have inspired something in the air. Iowa’s Supreme Court and Vermont’s state legislature each decided five days apart in April that same-sex marriage should be legal in their states. In Massachusetts and Connecticut, it already was. That makes 46 states that still restrict marrying rights, 46 battlegrounds and 46 chances to make 46 strides toward equality.

Patrick Egan, a researcher in politics and public policy at New York University, co-authored a study after Prop. 8 passed to find out which demographics voted which way. Nothing surprising there. Seventy percent of those who attend a religious service each week voted in favor. Eighty-one percent of Republicans voted in favor. Sixty percent of those without friends who are gay or lesbian voted in favor.

“In other research that I’ve done, that result is pretty consistent that members of those groups — conservative Republicans, more religious folks — all tend to be most opposed to the idea of legal same-sex marriage,” Egan says.

In light of these statistics, two California students, Ali Shams and Kaelan Housewright, proposed a measure for the ballot of next year’s November elections that, if passed, would reword state statutes to make “marriage” a social ceremony and “domestic partners” the legal term. That would effectively dodge the same-sex marriage issue altogether, which, Shams and Housewright hope, would cater to the religious voters.

Meanwhile, other actions build up in California’s legal channels. Since Prop. 8 passed, the California Supreme Court has been preparing for and listening to arguments challenging the
changes the election authorized. Any ruling from the court must come no later than June 2.

On March 5, it held a hearing to discuss appeals to overturn Prop. 8, but the court didn’t seem likely to reverse the election results.

“... What I’m picking up from the oral argument in this case is this court should willy-nilly disregard the will of the people,” the New York Times reported Justice Joyce L. Kennard saying to the attorneys appealing Prop. 8. They seemed more likely to budge on another issue: whether pre-existing same-sex marriages will remain valid.

In May of last year, the court ruled same-sex marriages legal when they hadn’t been previously. Between May and November, an estimated 18,000 marriages were performed.

Carley, a husband and father of two children, was one of those 18,000. He says he has feelings of being in limbo while waiting for the court decision. “But it doesn’t change how I feel about my husband or my kids,” he says. “We’re still a family. So they can try, but they can’t really take it away from me.”

Despite the outcome of any current protests, campaigns, ballot items or court rulings, Karger says reverberations from Prop. 8’s passing will speed movement toward equal rights by a generation. “If we’d plodded along like we have been doing — winning legal cases state-by-state, here and there — it might have taken two generations to really get full equal rights, federally. But I think this is going to take 20 years off our battle. I know it.”

Egan’s research shows it’s headed that way. Support for legalizing same-sex marriage has grown over the last eight years. “What happened in California is that a pretty favorable debate regarding same-sex marriage happened statewide,” he says.

“Probably the best example is to look in Massachusetts where the state supreme court required the state to start issuing licenses to same-sex couples, and after a big statewide debate, the state legislature resisted changing the constitution to prohibit that,” Egan says. “As people see that this happens, and the sky doesn’t fall, a substantial proportion of people change their opinion.”

Who knows? Maybe individual grassroots movements are more effective than the conventional unified approach. As Karger says, “We don’t have a Martin Luther King Jr., but I don’t think we need one. We just need to continue with the progress we’re making.”

Maybe unity doesn’t have to mean a march on Washington. Maybe it’s not marching at all.

Carley says it’s telling a story.

“I think we might win the next time,” he says. “If we get clearer in presenting ourselves and presenting our stories, I think people will really take a second look at it.”

>> At the federal level, LGBT rights legislation is abundant and broad. Even as Congress and President Barack Obama move hastily to cut short the recession, Trevor Thomas, deputy communications director for the Human Rights Campaign, says other bills haven’t been pushed aside.

“We’ve certainly witnessed that the Barack Obama administration is able to do multiple things at once,” he says. “We have seen equal pay for women pass at the time when he was working to pass his stimulus bill and the legislation concerning it. So we know that we are going to work to push forward our aggressive agenda.”

The HRC has taken the lead in lobbying for several items, among them, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would prevent employers from prejudicial hiring practices based on sexual orientation or gender identity. ENDA passed through the House of Representatives last year, 235-184.

They’re also working toward “introducing and passing fully inclusive hate-crimes protections so that people, of course, are protected under law and not killed for who they are,” Thomas says.

The Matthew Shepard Act, formerly the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, went through both houses of Congress as part of the Department of Defense Authorization bill. But it was dropped from the final version of that bill. Thomas says the HRC hopes to have Obama sign a hate-crimes bill by this summer.

The method of choice for getting federal legislation passed? “Intensive grassroots campaign,” HRC’s Web site advertises. — Ben Wolford

Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007
(The Matthew Shepard Act)
> Details: Authorizes the Attorney General to send resources for investigation or prosecution in violent crimes “motivated by prejudice based on the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the victim.”
> Status: Received in the Senate. Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. Failed in the Senate in 2007 after it was attached to a Department of Defense Authorization bill Democrats opposed.

Tax Equity for Health Plan Beneficiaries Act of 2007
> Details: Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion from gross income for employer-provided health coverage to designated plan beneficiaries of employees, and for other purposes.
> Status: Read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on Finance. In the House, it was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007
> Details: Would make it unlawful employment practice to discriminate based on actual or perceived sexual orientation.
> Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Domestic Partner Benefits and Obligations Act of 2007
> Details: Would extend the same family benefits to domestic partners as are already extended to married partners.
> Status: Referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Referred to the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Post Office and the District of Columbia in the House.

Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2007
> Details: Would amend Title 10 to enhance the readiness of the military by replacing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” with a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.
> Status: Referred to the House Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

Uniting American Families Act of 2009
> Details: Would include “permanent partner” in the score of the Immigration and Nationality Act, a permanent partner being someone 18 or older who “is in a committed, intimate relationship.”
> Status: Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary of both the House and the Senate.

Source: http://thomas.loc.gov
By Kelly Pickerel

Since his arrival at Kent State Stark Campus in 2000, Jay Sloan was waiting patiently for this past New Year’s Day.

That’s when a domestic partner benefit plan went into effect at Kent State, the ninth Ohio college to finally offer the option to faculty, staff and their partners.

“This was the huge milestone,” Sloan says now, as one of the 27 individuals across Kent State’s eight campuses to enroll in the benefit plan. “There’s a huge sense of relief. One of our big concerns was some sort of catastrophic health issue that would make it very difficult for us. Those kinds of barriers aren’t there now.”

Sloan and his partner, Herman Guy, now have the chance to not only live without the worry of untreatable health issues, but also Guy can receive dependent life insurance, voluntary accidental death and dismemberment insurance and a tuition fee waiver, along with medical, prescription, vision and dental insurance.

Although the benefit of insurance is a plus, some have found problems with the university’s plan. Nancy Green, a faculty member who wished to remain anonymous, noticed her insurance was suspended temporarily in preparation for the Jan. 1 start date when she signed up during the fall. “I got concerned over Christmas break. I looked at my HR tab on FlashLine, and it said (my insurance) was terminated. So I called, and they said it was just a computer glitch,” Green says.
Green’s partner needed medication soon after Jan. 1, and the glitches in the computer system had to be handled quickly. “At CVS, they said there was no coverage,” she says. “I called the benefits office right away, and they said (they) were taking care of it.” The problem was fixed within hours.

Sloan says most of the original problems at the beginning of the year were because of the newness of the plan to all parties involved. “There was a scramble to get this stuff together,” he says. “It definitely felt like the university was also scrambling, figuring out how to do this.”

The delay was to understand government requirements for the plan. University benefits manager Loretta Shields says the standard guidelines were adopted from other university plans, but the Internal Revenue Service requirements were a big adjustment.

The U.S. government does not recognize a domestic partner as a spouse in that while spouses and children are considered dependents of the employee, domestic partners are not. Therefore, benefits for a domestic partner are taxed. According to policy, eligible partners must be at least 18 years old, share a permanent residence, have been in the relationship for at least six months, are not currently married to anyone else, are not related by blood and are financially interdependent on each other. And they must prove this when signing during the annual Open Enrollment period.

Shields says this process is out of the university’s hands. “They are just standard guidelines,” she says. “We adopted our process by looking at several other universities.”

According to policy, eligible partners must be at least 18 years old, share a permanent residence, have been in the relationship for at least six months, are not currently married to anyone else, are not related by blood and are financially interdependent on each other. And they must prove this when signing during the annual Open Enrollment period.

The U.S. government does not recognize a domestic partner as a spouse in that while spouses and children are considered dependents of the employee, domestic partners are not. Therefore, benefits for a domestic partner are taxed. According to policy, eligible partners must be at least 18 years old, share a permanent residence, have been in the relationship for at least six months, are not currently married to anyone else, are not related by blood and are financially interdependent on each other. And they must prove this when signing during the annual Open Enrollment period.

Shields says this process is out of the university’s hands. “They are just standard guidelines,” she says. “We adopted our process by looking at several other universities.”

Denise Shordt, manager of benefits at the University of Toledo, says when her university’s plan went into effect in April 2006, the benefits office ran into some of the same problems Kent State is facing, especially the headache of documentation and requirements. But the two universities’ plans are basically carbon copies of one another.

“There are some people who don’t want to commit to having (their partner) on the mortgage. But that’s one of the qualifications,” to have a shared residence, Shordt says. “When you’re committed, you’re committed.”

Now three years later, Shordt says there aren’t too many unanswered questions. “The group of domestic partners was steady. We have added a few every year, but we don’t have a lot of problems.”

Bill Rickert, associate provost at Wright State University, says when the plan was implemented in January 2007 at WSU, the university knew there would be problems.

“There was confusion that led to some incorrect deductions and inconvenience, if not hardship, on the part of some employees,” Rickert says in an e-mail. “While there was consternation about the tax issues, all else has gone quite smoothly. Conversations I have had with individual employees and interested groups during the last couple of years suggest that most people are pleased about the benefits, and I have not received anything negative.”

Daniel Nadon, associate professor of theater at the Kent State Trumbull Campus, missed the deadline this year at Kent State and says he was asked to apply again in the fall. Overall, he’s very supportive of the plan.

“It was what I expected,” he says. “Nothing the university can offer will match the benefit package for spouses of legally married persons. But, (the university) did their best.”

It may not be the best, but it’s good enough for Sloan, Nadon and other Kent State faculty and staff who can finally act after years of waiting.

“I realize what the university is up against. They can’t change federal law,” Sloan says. “(Administrators have) done what they could, and they’ve done a decent job with it. I think that we’ve just been beaten up enough that we were cynical from the beginning.

“The next things are beyond the university, more at the state level. Maybe further down the line, we can embrace the ‘m’ word.”

TERMS TO KNOW

Voluntary Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance
Covers accidental deaths and injuries, including limbs and eyesight; in the case of death, benefits will be paid including that of life insurance

Dependant Life Insurance
Domestic partner, as well as employee, receives lump sum of money after death or critical illness

Tuition Fee Waver
Partner can attend classes at Kent State free of charge

Source: Kent State HR
PRIDE IN THE HEART OF IT ALL

BY DENISE WRIGHT

>> Thousands of people sporting colorful signs and banners will soon take over the streets of Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton. Across the state, this summer’s Pride attendees will have a great deal to look forward to with events ranging from rallies and guest speakers to drag poker runs and softball games.

Jan Adams-Richards, Columbus Pride coordinator, says one weekend is simply not enough for “Columbus Pride ’09: Freedom,” which will host events throughout all of June.

The festivities will begin with an art exhibit Saturday, June 6. Other events include the 18-hole golf scramble event Fore! Pride, a 5K walk/run, art exhibits and panel discussions.

Adams-Richards says the festival will offer something for everyone. There will be a family area for those with children as well as the Pride Poker Run, a scavenger hunt of sorts in which motorcycle enthusiasts will ride to various bars and restaurants to pick up playing cards.

The main event, the Pride festival, kicks off Friday, June 19, at Goodale Park, instead of the usual Bicentennial Park, which is currently under construction.

But as always, the festival will include vendors, food and beverage stands and entertainment. Friday night’s performers include Trina Hamlin, Melissa Ferrick and Coyote Grace.

The Pride Rally, which will start at 11:30 a.m. on the Statehouse Lawn, will begin Saturday’s festivities. Speakers will include LGBT advocates and politicians such as Jennifer Brunner, Ohio Secretary of State; Marilyn Brown, Franklin County Commissioner; Eric Brown, Franklin County Probate Court Judge; Ohio Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy; and possibly Gov. Ted Strickland.

The Pride Parade will then step off at 1 p.m from the Statehouse. Adams-Richards says last year’s parade, which featured more than 150 entries, drew in an estimated crowd of 120,000.

Entertainment for that day’s festival will begin around 6 p.m. and will include performances by the Fabulous Johnson Brothers and Kat DeLuna.

The Pride festivities will conclude Sunday, June 21, with the Bat-N-Rouge drag softball game, which Adams-Richards says shouldn’t be missed.

“They go all out,” Adams-Richards says. “They’re in heels and full costumes. It’s hilarious.”

Individuals may register to participate or volunteer at the Columbus Pride Web site.

“It’s a great weekend for people to just come out and be themselves … Even today, a lot of people, in their everyday lives, can’t be who they really feel they are,” Adams-Richards says.
Scotty Didier, communications volunteer for Dayton Pride Partnership 2009, says “United in Pride! Many Faces, One Community!” will hold all of its festivities during the first week of June, instead of later in the month.

Despite the change, the switch will, however, enable Dayton’s festival to act as the “premier kickoff” to the Midwest’s Pride season.

The festivities will open with the Pride Dinner on Wednesday, June 3, at Sinclair Community College. The dinner will feature keynote speaker Malcolm Lazin of the Equality Forum in Philadelphia and comedienne Poppy Champlin. According to Champlin’s Web site, www.poppycockprod.com, her stand-up routine mixes the “sweet grooving persona of Ellen DeGeneres with Denis Leary’s raunchy sarcasm.”

The events will continue with multiple screenings of “Saint of 9/11” at Neon Movies the following day.

On Friday, June 5, Pride Night on the Quadrant, an evening of shows, dancing and drinking, will be held between Third and Second street, adjacent to the LGBT Center and most of the Dayton bars.

The week concludes with the usual Pride Parade and rally on Saturday, June 6, beginning at 11 a.m. in Cooper Park. The rally will follow at Courthouse Square.
On the car ride home from a Human Rights Campaign fundraiser in 2000, a group of active LGBT community members from Akron came up with an idea that has since become a source of funding for promoting equality and awareness in the city.

“What we had noticed was that there were a lot of Akron-area participants at the HRC event,” says Steven Schmidt, a former president of the Gay Community Endowment Fund’s advisory board. “A number of us in the car had been involved in community organizations in Akron. We realized there were supportive individuals, but no system to support it. That’s how it all got started.”

The only question was how.

They returned to Akron and began throwing house parties, thinking they might raise money like the HRC. But then they decided: Why not raise money and put it into a fund to give Akron a permanent source of income designed specifically to benefit the LGBT community?

That source is now known as the Gay Community Endowment Fund of the Akron Community Foundation. From funding the arts to simply putting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender literature in public places, the GCEF funds a variety of causes throughout the Rubber City, with an emphasis on youth, arts and cultural issues.

“We were all college students once, we were all community activists once, and we knew that it was tough to get grant funding and get money for gay-related causes,” says Christopher Hixson, current chair of the board.

Schmidt says the group’s affiliation with the Akron Community Foundation, an endowment fund for the greater Akron community, has been a two-way street.

“They help us manage our fund and provide professional oversight of investments. We were not professional money managers,” he says. “… From their point of view, they recognized, to their credit, that LGBT folks lived in the Akron community, and they should be serving our interests and our needs as well.”
Hixson says the affiliation has also added credibility to the GCEF.

“We’ve just become part of the city, just like anyone else, and that’s what we’re going for: full inclusion,” he says.

The biggest grant in the endowment’s history — $10,000 — was awarded last year to fund the Akron Pride Center, which will open, at least partially, this fall.

“It was a big thing for them, as well as us,” says Steven Antalvari, chairman of the Board for the Akron Pride Center.

He says the two organizations did a little bit of seeking each other out because of their similar missions. And when the Akron Pride organization originally applied for a grant of $7,900, the endowment fund advisory board suggested they raise their request to $10,000.

Because most of the work done to get Pride Center running has been by volunteers, he says the donation will help a great deal.

“The community wants the doors open,” he says. “The economy is rough, and even though the economy is rough, we’re still going.”

And Hixson doesn’t deny that the nation’s financial slump hit the endowment fund — but it will still be able to fund organizations in the next year. The endowment fund is unique, he says, in that it looks at the past three years of income when determining how much it can give to fund requests. Therefore, even though donations have been down this year, the previous two years’ weren’t.

Also, Hixson notes foundations lost an average of 29.1 percent of their value this past year nationally. The GCEF has lost only 26 percent of it. They’ve also collaborated with the Gill Foundation, which is based in Colorado. This foundation matched each dollar that the endowment fund raises for up to $25,000, and they recently reached this goal this past February at their annual dinner.

“It’s a great way to raise money because for every dollar that you raise from your own constituents, it doubles the investment,” Schmidt says.

Hixson says it’s good the foundation gives those in the gay community who don’t have children a place to leave their money when they die. But the largest source of money each year is the Sugar Plum Tour, a holiday fundraiser. Community members decorate six homes throughout Akron and open them to a daylong tour raising about $30,000 each year.

“The cool thing about it is that it’s not a gay event,” Hixson says. “It’s families, it’s grandmas and grandpas and mom’s and dad’s. It’s just a big community-building event where all the money goes to the Gay Community Fund, but everybody has fun doing it.”

For more information on GCEF, visit its Web site at gaycommunityfund.org.

‘...THEY CAN’T DO THE SAME THING BECAUSE I WAS BORN STRAIGHT AND THEY WERE BORN GAY, AND THAT’S BULLSHIT’

Cleveland will be the third city in the state to open a domestic partner registry in May, but its opponents are still pushing to leave it up to popular vote in the fall.

BY CHRISTINA STAVALE

Opposite and same-sex couples wanting to register for a domestic partnership in Cleveland may have to act fast when the registry opens May 7.

Cleveland City Council passed an ordinance this past December that will grant unmarried couples a certificate documenting their partnership.

There’s no stopping the registry from opening as scheduled; however, groups of church leaders are collecting signatures to put the ordinance on the ballot this September or November. This would allow voters to choose whether they want the registry to stay open.

It’s not marriage, but it’s a step toward giving unmarried couples some rights.

“It could allow hospital visits,” says Sue Doerfer, executive director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center of Greater Cleveland. “… Or picking up students at school or daycare centers. It is something … We hear stories all the time — one of the people dies and nothing is written down. It’s some recognition that this couple is a family. They are attached and committed to each other.”

Doerfer has been instrumental in making Cleveland a more LGBT-friendly city through her work with an unofficial group called Cleveland Families Count.

“For a couple of years, a group of people have been working with people of city council on changing policies at the city — one was providing domestic partner benefits to employees and adding transgender language to discrimination ordinance,” she says. “When we started doing work on benefits, we spent a year meeting with city council, HR and insurance companies.”

But the insurance companies had a concern: fraud. Enter, the domestic partner registry.

Joe Cimperman, Ward 13 councilman for Cleveland City Council, introduced the ordinance last October. When it passed a few months later, Cleveland became the third city in Ohio to pass a domestic partner registry, joining Cleveland Heights and Toledo.

It’s a cause Cimperman says he’s passionate about because it’s about social justice.

“I got married a couple years ago, and there were a dozen gay and lesbian couples at my wedding, dating longer than me and my wife,” he says. “I looked to them for advice. But they can’t do the same thing because I was born straight and they were born gay. And that’s bullshit.”

Cimperman says their strategies forming and saving the registry are based on Toledo more than Cleveland Heights. Cleveland Heights passed their domestic partner registry before Issue 1, a statewide amendment passed in 2004 that prohibited civil unions and same-sex marriages in Ohio.

For more information on GCEF, visit its Web site at gaycommunityfund.org.
went into effect. Cleveland had to be more careful with the language they used, making it very clear that this domestic partner registry is not a marriage.

“The far right thinks this could lead to gay marriage,” Cimperman says. “As much as conservatives would like to say it is, people trying to collect signatures (against the domestic partner registry) are from everywhere. What is it to them if the city of Cleveland wants to offer this? What is the big threat here, if (couples) would live together on a lease, visit in the hospital, show commitment? This is 2009. We have to be honest with each other.”

David Caldwell is also working to save the registry. He’s a spokesperson for AskCleveland.org, a group that worked hard to get the ordinance passed in Cleveland Heights. He says because Cleveland Heights has had the registry, it’s improved the atmosphere for LGBT people. He wants that to spread to Cleveland, but if the registry ends up being repealed in Cleveland, it could severely hurt the climate.

“Right now we have to make it stick,” Caldwell says. “If we lose this election, Cleveland’s going to be a national laughing stock. We’re going to probably be subjected to a national boycott by the gay community.”

In order for the domestic partner registry to be on the ballot, those who want the registry to be repealed must collect 5,000 signatures. They don’t have an official time limit, but if they want it to be on the ballot this fall, they have until the time the registry is scheduled to open. However, if they fail to collect enough signatures by then, they can keep trying to reach the amount required, and it could go on the ballot at a later date.

In the meantime, Caldwell says groups who want to keep the registry open need to work just as hard to garner support in case the ordinance should go on the ballot. He says he thinks the best way to do this is to talk to people door-to-door. When someone says they’re against the registry, he asks, “Why?”

“We know that gay marriage is an issue people disagree on,” he says. “(But) we think that domestic partnership, which is a simple legal institution, (allowing) hospital visitation, shared employee benefits, are inherited rights.”

Doerfer says she thinks it’s also important to target Cleveland’s diverse population not just by going door-to-door, but by working with neighborhoods and block clubs. Still, she admits she’s worried.

“When a major city like Cleveland puts civil rights of a minority to the vote of a majority, it is a very, very tough battle ... it’s very hard to predict where the results are going.”

Doerfer says she thinks it’s also important to target Cleveland’s diverse population not just by going door-to-door, but by working with neighborhoods and block clubs. Still, she admits she’s worried.

“When a major city like Cleveland puts civil rights of a minority to the vote of a majority, it is a very, very tough battle,” she says. “Look at Proposition 8 in California. Putting the rights of a minority to a public vote is a very difficult process. It’s very hard to predict where the results are going.”

David Caldwell encourages people who want to help to organize a group of people passionate about the cause, throw a house party to do some fundraising or just take a day to go out and talk to people. For more information, visit AskCleveland.org.
God Loves You, Just the Way You Are.

The Truth
The Whole Truth
and Nothing But

The Perfect Biblical Knowledge DVD for every GLBT person.

www.thetruththewholetruthandnothingbut.net
‘MILK’
SUPPORTING STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF THROUGH ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION

Women’s Resource Center, Carriage House
Phone: (866) 339-3699 & (330) 672-9230
Web site: www.kent.edu/wrc
Hours: 8am-5pm, M-F
- Free HIV testing
- Brochure, Literature
- Speakers
- Education
- Outreach
- Volunteers
- Housing for HIV+

The MPowerment is a program provided by Community AIDS Network that primarily targets gay/bisexual men ages 18-29; however, we welcome and support any age/gender at our meetings and events. This is a group where participants are encouraged to make new friends, volunteer, learn about the differences in each of us and learn from those differences.

We are looking for new members! We need 5-10 dedicated individuals to get this program off the ground. Activities include party nights, day trips, camping retreats and movie nights! If interested in becoming a member, please contact Danny @ 330.252.1648
>> Each year at the Cleveland International Film Festival in March, the 10% Cinema series features under-the-radar movies focusing on LGBT characters and their lives. While you might have to do some digging to get your hands on a copy of these films, they tell out-of-the-ordinary stories about real-life issues in unique, creative ways — well, most of the time.  

By Adam Griffiths

When ‘Brokeback’

the AWARD-WINNER

Trinidad

Directed by PJ Raval, Jay Hodges
From USA

>> Trinidad, Colo., is the sex change capital of the world. That’s right — Colorado. Since the ’60s, the former coal-mining town has been the site of thousands of genital reassignment surgeries. This documentary follows three women whose journeys brought them all to this remote Western town to complete their transition into bodies and lives that match the feelings they’ve had their entire lives. “Trinidad” puts their personal stories in the context of how the women became a part of the community while learning to live in their new bodies. Dr. Marci Bowers, once Mark, is world-renowned for her genital reassignment work. Sabrina Marcus and Dr. Laura Ellis work to establish a halfway house for Marci’s patients recovering from their own surgeries. The interaction among these three women, their families and the community they serve is an intimate, full-circle portrait into the lives of those so often misunderstood.

>> The film also screened at festivals in Denver and Los Angeles, and it won the Neosnady + Schwartz Documentary Film Competition at the Cleveland fest. “Trinidad” will show on Showtime this summer and eventually LOGO as well. Visit www.trinidadthemovie.com for the latest information.

the BROODING TYPE

Ciao

Written by Allesandro Ca
Written and directed by Yen Tan
From USA

>> “Ciao” is the story of two men who are dealing with the loss of a very close friend — a friend one of them never met. After the death of his best friend, Jeff discovers Mark’s relationship with Andrea while keeping up with Mark’s e-mail. The thing is, Mark’s from Dallas, Andrea’s from Italy and they were planning on meeting in-person for the first time soon after Mark’s tragic car accident. Andrea comes anyway, and tension quickly develops between the two relative strangers. The tension between them is what makes “Ciao” engaging, and while it’s maybe a little too subtle and muted in places, the film tells a sort of passionate, modern love story that’s easy to envy. It proves even in the fast-paced world we live in today, it’s possible to find a connection in the most unexpected of places. Visit www.ciamovie.com for more information.

the FAMILY FUNNY

Chef’s Special

Written by Antonio Sánchez
Written and directed by Nacho Velilla
From Spain

>> Maxi is a successful Spanish chef whose success seems thwarted when his ex-wife dies, and he’s left with his 15-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter. Add to that, his maitre d’ seems destined for romantic failure, and sparks are flying with a sexy, closeted soccer player who moves in next door. “Chef’s Special” was the feel-good part of this year’s LGBT film series. It’s the stereotypical story single dad left with kids he doesn’t know, but given the context, it’s hilarious all over again. The film is currently playing in limited release across the country. Visit tlareleasing.com for DVD release information.

the EXPECTABLE

Between Love & Goodbye

Written and directed by Casper Andreas
From USA

>> I spent most of “Between Love & Goodbye” sinking down in my seat at how cliché and ridiculous it all seemed. Marcel and Kyle are dating, but Marcel has to marry Kyle’s best friend, Sarah, so he doesn’t get deported. When Kyle’s transsexual sister April moves in, Marcel and Kyle’s relationship disintegrates from petty squabbling to literal squabbling to Kyle ratting out Marcel for immigration fraud, and Marcel kicking Kyle out of the apartment. Even the music was corny and predictable. Still, if you really want to see this film, it’s playing in some theaters now, and you can order it on DVD at www.embrem.com.
"I just isn't enough"

the LESBIAN FLICK

On the tail end of a weekend together in Oxford, England, Leyla (left) wonders what's next between her and Tala.

I Can't Think Straight

Written by Kelly Moss
Written and directed by Shamim Sarif
From United Kingdom

>> I saw in the meantime, and the only focus on lesbians was one of the best I saw this year. The writing was good. The acting was more than tolerable. Leyla is a goody-goody British Muslim of Indian descent who meets the wealthy, go-getting Tala, a Palestinian Christian who’s on her third engagement. Leyla falls for Tala. Tala tells Leyla she can’t break the engagement and must keep up an image for her family’s social position. Leyla moves on. Tala can’t. And in the end, of course, they’ll live happily ever after. I know, it sounds just as cliché as “Between Love & Goodbye,” but it was a comedic, light-hearted reminder of how uncertain destiny is and to always follow your heart. Check it out on DVD at www.enlightenment-production.com.

the MOCKUMENTARY

Jay, a so-called documentarian, shares his documentary on the life of Jay Mercado, a recent gay murder victim, with his latest boy conquest.

Jay

Written and directed by Francis X. Pasion
From Philippines

>> It’s hard to take any reality television program as any reflection of reality after sitting through “Jay.” We’re introduced to Jay Mercado, a cute young schoolteacher, through a television report of his brutal murder. What we come to find out is that this isn’t news — this is a Filipino reality show, “Dearily Departed Ones,” that “chronicles” the grieving process. The second Jay we meet is the reporter who meets the family, shares the news of their loss and proceeds to follow them until the funeral. The problem with this “coverage” is that Jay and his camera man become part of the story they’re “reporting.” Jay coerces the late man’s family to reenact tragic scenes, such as their arrival at the morgue where their son and brother’s body is being kept, and later the moment when chicks are placed on Mercado’s casket to peck the souls of his murderers. At one point during a viewing, the cameraman even knocks the casket shut, and reporter Jay invites Mercado’s ex-boyfriend to join the scene even after the sorrowful woman explicitly asks him not to. By the end of the movie, you’re left wondering if Jay the reporter had a role in murdering Jay the schoolteacher in the first place. It almost feels too ridiculous to be representative of anything that could ever happen, but the film’s strength lies in its ability to make you question what media portray as “truth.”

the RAY OF HOPE

Developers and community leaders celebrate the opening of Triangle Square, the nation’s first affordable, multi-cultural housing development supporting the needs of LGBT seniors.

A Place to Live

The Story of Triangle Square

Directed by Carolyn Coal
From USA

>> I tend to favor the documentaries I see at the film festival more than anything else, and this one blew everyone in the auditorium away. “A Place to Live” follows seven older, low-income LGBT residents in Los Angeles. The film begins by telling their various stories of the challenges of finding affordable housing as they reach the end of their lives. Some face discrimination from their landlords, as sexual orientation isn’t covered in equal housing laws, and others can no longer physically function in their current situations. Recognizing these members of the community were at a serious disadvantage, developers and leaders formed the Gay & Lesbian Elder Housing non-profit organization. The result: a $21 million development of 100 apartments focusing specifically on their needs. “A Place to Live” chronicles their journey from finding out about Triangle Square and applying to live there to the opening night party where one resident tells the crowd there’s no place she’d rather be and finally moving in. It’s the story of an often neglected segment of our community and should be an example for major metros across the country.

the ONES TO MISS

Whirlwind

Written by Jason Brown
Written and directed by Richard LeMay
From USA

>> This one easily could’ve been titled, “Drake’s Pathetic Attempt at Revenge.” When he comes across a close-knit group of friends, he immediately tries to seduce the pretty-boy Sean, who’s dating Bobby and having issues committing to getting an apartment with him. One drunken evening, Drake seduces Sean, pushing Bobby to leave him. This throws their group of friends — in the midst of planning an anniversary party for — into disarray. And when Drake shows up at the party at the end of the movie, after Bobby takes Sean back, he pretty much just makes a fool of himself. “Whirlwind” really just ends up being one gay man’s bitchy attempt to ruin a relationship.

Antarctica

Written and directed by Yair Hochner
From Israel

>> This may be one of the worst movies I’ve ever seen — gay, straight or otherwise. While it does offer up a lot of gratuitous sex in the first ten minutes of the film, “Antarctica” lacks any sort of story to care about and instead serves up the rather pointless day-to-day interactions of a bunch of pretty people in Tel Aviv. This movie about gays, lesbians and an author who believes leads the main characters to an alien landing at the end of the film. No one we meet in “Antarctica” has much depth. They seem to only have one specific goal in mind for the more than hour-and-a-half we spend with them and really make it hard to care about their dilemmas at all. There’s even a drag queen who plays the outrageous Jewish mother who gossips about her kids’ life struggles at the salon. Easily the only movie of this year’s series I’d rather forget, you can find more information at www.heretv.com.
Virtually everyone has had insecure thoughts about body image. For many, it’s realizing pants worn months ago aren’t fitting as comfortably as before. For me, last year, it was looking at a photo my parents had taken of me while visiting Kent State. At the time, I was 5-foot-6 and edging on 250 pounds. Regardless of how much I hated admitting it, I’ve always known I was fat, and never could I remember a time when I wasn’t. Seeing myself in any picture made me upset, but it was in this photo I realized my nightmare of staying obese forever was on the verge of becoming reality.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 35 percent of adult females and 33 percent of adult males are classified as obese. On top of serious health risks such as heart disease or Type 2 diabetes, people who perceive themselves as unattractively overweight are vulnerable to lower self-esteem and self-image.

It wasn’t very long ago I would go to the bathroom, look in the mirror, tear up and ask myself questions such as, “Is this how I’m going to look for the rest of my life?” At the end of each of my ranting spells, I’d always make up some half-full promise to change my lifestyle and become healthily slimmer. “I’ll cut a meal out of each of my days,” or “I’ll do more chores around the house to burn calories.” The most depressing part of it all was realizing that these “promises” were just part of many ill-faith cycles where I’d fail in the end.

My biggest priority concerning a social life during those years was blending into the crowd or more so hiding in it. I’d go as far as to argue obesity was the number one reason I stayed in the closet for my entire high school life. Unlike most of the LGBT peers I’ve met in high school and college, my life had no actual religious or family barriers. Both my church and family welcome diversity. What kept me so reluctant about the openness of my sexuality was the “distinctive” attention I’d direct toward my obese figure and me. I was so sure if any attention were directed at me, it’d eventually find its way to my repulsive gut, man boobs and sheer width. It may sound silly now, but it plagued my mind throughout high school and prevented the openness of my homosexuality only up until recently.

So obviously there must’ve been a happy ending, otherwise I’d be 85 pounds heavier and still in the closet. As it turns out, success does come by taking one solid leap and progressively moving forward.

In relation to becoming fit, solid leaps more than often take on the form of routine exercising. Mine was committing my weeks to more than eight hours of jogging and weightlifting, first at the gym in my hometown, then at the rec center here on campus.

I took further steps in losing weight by setting both small and moderately effective rules for me to follow. One dramatic change I made was forcing myself not to consume calories after 8 p.m. Although the cause is highly debatable among health practitioners, most studies have shown a correlation between weight loss and cutting late-night eating and snacking. Another less direct habit I adopted was keeping records — first on my weight, then on my workout performances. Recording weights and workout performances helped me keep focus on my goals, whether it was to lose five more pounds by the end of the month or strive to chest press three sets of 190 pounds at my next gym visit.

What’s amazing is it all worked. Between April 20, 2008, the day I began working out, and Aug. 20, the day I moved onto campus, I had already lost 40 pounds. I hadn’t weighed so little since seventh grade. I was so proud of my accomplishment, but I knew there was more work to be done, and as crazy as it sounds, campus life made my weight-loss adventure even easier to achieve. Walking the campus from destination to destination burned extra calories my gym visits had missed, and my independent eating schedule held less hunger temptation than at home, where my mom would sometimes cook spaghetti at 9:30 at night. Instead of losing 10 pounds each month, I was losing more than 15 pounds. By early November, I reached my weight loss goal of 80 pounds, and since then I’ve been building muscle and shedding the rest of my extra skin through exercise.

I’d be lying if I said losing 85 or more pounds is easy. In fact, there’s no way of measuring the difficulty of losing weight because it’s a different experience for everyone, considering all sorts of varying obstacles. For some, it’s convenient time management. For others, it’s living in an environment, caving in to unhealthy temptations. And for the rest, it’s either some emotional, biological, medical or chemical issue preventing someone from reaching his or her ideal weight and figure. Whatever the issue, the basic key in solving it is taking one solid leap in front, and then gradually moving further on from there. ★
CASCADE COMMUNITY CHURCH

“Akron’s Gay Christian Church since 1978”

Sunday 11 a.m. | Everyone Welcome

From Kent: Take I-76 West to I-77 South, First Exit is Archwood, Turn left to second light (Inman), turn right 1/2 block on your right!

www.cccohio.org
1190-1196 Inman Street
Akron 330.773.5298
‘I WANT TO TAKE OVER THIS PLACE.’

For Ray Campbell, college is a career — for now
This would piss most journalists off, but I’m not fazed. Two years ago, Ray was my date for my sorority’s formal.

He didn’t arrive at the sorority house until we were boarding the bus to leave.

I was halfway between tears and anger when he finally made it. As soon as he said, “I’m sorry!” and kissed me on the cheek, I was under Ray’s spell. It’s happened to lots of people. He could tell you the sky is hot pink, and you’d believe him. He’s the guy who can rely on his name alone to get people to a party. He’s so ridiculously genuine and accommodating to everyone. Ray has the ability to one day plan the Democratic National Convention, says Jay Hayes, the adviser of Sigma Nu, Ray’s fraternity. He’s the guy who compliments every girl, no matter what she’s wearing. He has built a reputation on being nice to everyone.

“Max Weber called it charisma, and there’s no real way to measure it or define it, but you know it when you see it, and he’s got it,” says Hayes. “He is the most charismatic person I’ve ever met. He can walk into a room full of people and he can walk up to you, put his arm around you and the next thing you know, you’re best friends. It’s perfectly genuine. That’s just him.”

In his six years at Kent State, Campbell became the most well-known figure in the Greek community, if not the entire Kent State student population. Even those who don’t know him have probably seen him around. He’s always wearing a backwards Kent State baseball cap. He has a knack for saying things like, “I’m just being a dude,” or “What’s up, hottie?” In the words of Darla from “Little Rascals,” he has a smile that can make a girl “melt like a Popsicle on the Fourth of July.” Just check out his Facebook photos, and you’ll understand. Speaking of Facebook, he has 2,198 friends.

It’s a Thursday night in March. The Robin Hood is already packed, and it’s not even midnight. Two lines are forming outside. Inside, people are carefully weaving around tables and bar stools, balancing beers in each hand. Getting to the dance floor is a task in itself. Ray makes his way around the bar, saying hello, hugging girls, getting his friends drinks and manning the door.

As he stands on stage looking out at the mass of dancing people before him — a mass of people he’s assembled — it feels like the end of Ray’s marathon to Kent State stardom. Now that his popularity is literally paying off, you have to wonder, how much longer can he ride this for?

He gets paid to throw parties. He’s attended seven sorority formals and more than earned his reputation as a lady’s man. As his friend Jesse Meekins says, Ray Campbell is “that guy” at Kent State. The guy everyone wants to be around. The guy who’s not afraid of having gay friends or the shit he might take for being on the cover of this magazine. The guy everyone knows but doesn’t really know.

“There are so many rumors about Ray Campbell out there,” Ray says. “Half of them are true, and half of them I’ve made up.”
“Max Weber called it charisma, and there’s no real way to measure it or define it, but you know it when you see it, and he’s got it.”
It’s a Friday afternoon, and Ray is recovering from his party at the Robin Hood the night before. After finishing his Wendy’s hamburger, he starts to talk.

He doesn’t stop for three hours.

Ten minutes into the interview, the two sides of Ray are revealed: the popular, crazy frat guy everyone loves and the witty college guy who has a tendency to ramble and sing along to Britney Spears.

Ray isn’t sure when or how he became so popular. Maybe it was because he was in a fraternity. Maybe it was because he was a Kent State cheerleader for four years. Maybe it’s because he has a penchant for stripping naked in public. (See next page.) However it happened, it was part of Ray’s plan since his freshman year.

“I remember, I was walking in the dark towards the Student Center one night and being like, ‘I want to take over this place,’” Ray says simply. No other explanation except ultimate takeover. Pretty lofty for a guy who describes himself in high school as “a bum athlete with a lot of acne.”

Although he’s been a prominent figure in the Greek community for years, Ray opened himself up to more people last semester when the Robin Hood hired him to throw parties every week. When Sigma Nu went on social probation last year due to falling grades and too much partying, according to Ray, the fraternity members started hanging out at the Robin Hood, a bar that used to be a local favorite but was losing business and popularity. When the owner offered Ray a job hosting parties, he was hesitant, but after the first went well, he was hooked. His parties have become a weekly tradition, attracting Greeks, non-Greeks and anyone who happens to walk past the Robin Hood Thursday night.

Anyone can gain a reputation for throwing parties, but Ray went beyond that. From pumping up the crowd at this semester’s basketball games, to participating in every Greek event on campus, Ray has become a master at self-promotion. His lifestyle may seem superficial to some, but Ray has become involved in his school’s theater program. That’s what brotherhood means.”

The mystery surrounding Ray is part of the attraction. Few people know where he’s from or how long he’s been in school. His age varies from 25-30, depending on who you ask. It’s rumored he has millions of dollars in student loans. It’s actually only about $20,000, he says. As is true in most cases, the rumors surrounding Ray are much more extraordinary than the truth.

He’s a Catholic boy from West Park. He attended St. Ignatius, an all-boys prep school, where he played football and wrestled. His parents are divorced, and he has an older brother, Dave. His life sounds pretty typical — that is until Ray discovered acting.

When he quit the wrestling team, Ray became involved in his school’s theater program. After he graduated in 2000, he started pursuing acting through Cleveland’s independent film scene. He acted in two local independent films in 2002, but neither was released. In “The Pact,” he plays a character he says resembles Stifler from “American Pie.” In the horror flick, “The Summer of the Snowman,” he says he gets hacked up and killed.

Ironically, Ray’s biggest role is actually his smallest part. In 2003, he went to an open casting in Cleveland for “American Splendor.” The movie starred Paul Giamatti and Hope Davis. Ray got a callback securing him a spot as an extra in the movie.

“The thing’s an airport scene, and I really think this is what got the Oscar,” he explains as he stands up. He makes a motion to grab an invisible suitcase and walks across the room. “‘The thing is, that’s all I did, was just grab my bag,’” he says, laughing and taking a seat. “I am in the movie for 45 seconds. It’s Paul Giamatti, (Hope Davis) and Ray Campbell, right in the middle. Like, I am in it for a long time — doing nothing!”

It’s difficult to say which is more surprising: the fact Ray was in an Oscar-winning movie or that few people know. Ray rarely mentions it. He doesn’t even list the movie on his résumé. Sure he likes to play up his big screen debut if it comes up in conversation, but don’t expect him to brag about it to every person he meets.

“The one thing (he and Van Wilder) share is a fear that they’re not going to be as great in the real world as he is in this place he’s created.”
In college, Ray got away from independent filmmaking and decided to concentrate on school. His decision to stay in college was even more difficult in 2003 after he spent two weeks in Los Angeles as part of the International Talent and Modeling Association. He got some callbacks, but Ray decided it would be best to graduate.

Now that he has, Ray plans to move to Los Angeles to pursue acting. He isn't some starry-eyed kid though, hoping for a big break in Hollywood. He's perfectly content to be in the background. “I've already won an Oscar being a background actor, so it can only go up from there.”

“Van Wilder” was way cooler and funnier and had way more boobs in it,” Ray says with only a hint of sarcasm. “I'm not at Van Wilder status yet, but I do get paid to party.”

Ray is the first to make jokes about his unusually long college experience. He once joked he’d been in school so long, why not shoot for 10 years? Still, he never planned to stay this long. After graduating from high school, he spent two years at Cuyahoga Community College West, which he calls “high school but with girls.” In 2003, he came to Kent State and spent six years here. He graduated last semester.

“It's impossible to get a straight-forward answer out of him as to why he took so long to graduate. He says he withdrew from a lot of classes if he failed a test early in the semester. He mentions his changing of majors from broadcast journalism to communications and finally to general studies.

But when you think about everything Ray’s done, from practically trademarking the brand “Ray Campbell” in his fraternity to being the face of the Robin Hood, can you blame him for wanting to stay? He's created this Neverland where college never ends, and the parties never stop.

“The one thing (he and Van Wilder) share is a fear that they're not going to be as great in the real world as he is in this place he's created,” says Ray's friend and Sigma Nu alumnus Andrew Meeks.

Still, even Ray knew he would have to leave eventually.

“I was busting my butt to graduate — for my family, my friends, for everyone who is just hoping Ray Campbell is doing something with his life,” he says. “Really, I feel like I'm doing it for other people too. I just don't want people to be judging me like, ‘Oh my God, he's still here?’”

Ray is indeed still here. He still lives in the fraternity house, and you can still catch him at the Robin Hood every week. In March, he was offered an internship with Kent State’s athletic department for the 2009-2010 school year. He will be in charge of in-game promotion and the marketing street team.

Even though he'll still be around for another year, Ray knows his time at Kent State won’t last forever, and he finally seems ready to address that.

“Even though I’m working and getting paid, I still feel like I’m in college. I want to branch out. I want to make Ray Campbell global,” he says, only half joking.

He may not be ready to leave Neverland just yet, but he is ready to admit his age.

“I'm 27 with a college degree, still living in a frat house, and I get paid to party. I couldn't think of anywhere else to be.”
I asked those who know Ray the best for an interesting story about him. Interestingly enough, all four stories involve Ray in various degrees of undressing. Surprised? – BRITTANY MOSELEY

Ray has a deal with the Robin Hood — he kind of had same thing with the comedy club, the Green Room. They paid him to fill up the place. He would perform stand-up comedy routines. One night he was trying out new material, and it just wasn’t going well. It wasn’t his best stuff. He thought of some of it that day. He didn’t tell any of our friends because he didn’t want any pressure. It wasn’t going well, so he just strips naked, pours a beer on himself and says, “Is this what you people want from me?” He ran outside, ran around the building, and then he bursts back in through the other door, naked, grabs his clothes and says “Is this what you people want from me?”

– John Kazik, former member of Sigma Nu

He crashed at our house on Sherman Street when he was on house arrest. He didn’t have a working phone line or cable or anything. He stayed over for a week, and one night

I was like, “Hey man, what do you want to do tonight?” One of our roommates had the Indiana Jones’ trilogy. We drank a case of Keystone throughout the course of the night and watched Indiana Jones’ movies. 7 a.m. rolled around, and Ray is naked on our front porch dancing around, and I was in my boxers running around and screaming.

– Jesse Meekins, Ray’s little brother in Sigma Nu

In the spring of 2005, as part of the Greek Week talent show, Sigma Nu was doing a rendition of the Hootie and the Blowfish Burger King commercial. The curtain opens up, and it’s a couple of guys playing guitar and singing the song. The only thing that Ray is wearing is cowboy boots, a cowboy hat and the skimpiest banana hammock. They closed the curtain on him halfway. Beth Gittons, the Greek adviser at the time, freaked out and ran to her office and called our national headquarters. Looking back on it, it didn’t break any rules, but it was pretty tasteless. I was mad at the time, but I thought it was hilarious. Just the thought that Ray would go and put on a banana hammock.

– Andrew Meeks, Sigma Nu alumnus

He was developing his persona, and unfortunately my first memory of him is when he got in trouble at a formal event because he ripped off all his clothes and ran across the stage in his underwear. Then I had to hear about it from the administration. That was my first real interaction with Ray. I don’t remember the circumstances. I wasn’t there for it. I just know that the Greek adviser at the time called me, and it was bad. It was sexual harassment bad, like, it was not good. But that’s Ray. One minute you love him to death, the next minute you’re afraid he’s going to get you sued over something.

– Jay Hayes, Sigma Nu adviser

–
That’s what sophomore exploratory major Jason Troyer thought when he first heard of Delta Lambda Phi. He rushed DLP during spring of his freshman year, but he was surprised the fraternity existed.

“The second I met all the brothers, I was like, ‘Yep, this is where I need to be,’” he says. “The first day I was initiated into the fraternity, they gave me my letters that day. I went to sleep when I went home and woke up and put my letters on, and it was such a great feeling to wear those.”

Delta Lambda Phi is a fraternity for gay, bisexual and progressive men. Founded in 1986 by two gay men, it’s now represented by 22 chapters across the nation. Kent State’s chapter, Alpha Psi, was founded in 2000.

Troyer says he thinks DLP is already making a difference at the university. “All across the U.S., there are people that need to be accepted,” he says. “We’re really, really growing. I really think that as you see these organizations pop up that it’s going to spark an interest and get people thinking.”

“It wasn’t always that way. Alumnus Bryan Guffey says it all started on one “fateful” day in 1999 when a few men on campus who had read about DLP got in touch with the national organization to begin the process of becoming a chapter. On February 20, 2000, the interest group had its first induction.

Then at the end of April 2001, after 14 months of rushing and pledging, Alpha Psi became a chapter at Kent State, but having chapter status according to national regulations wasn’t enough. DLP wasn’t yet officially recognized on campus, and it would take three attempts to petition to the Interfraternity Council for membership. The IFC voted against accepting DLP twice and, at the time, none of the voting members would offer an explanation as to why.

“Every university has their own different rules, and Kent State rules you have to be a member of one of the governing bodies,” DLP regional governor Eric Van Sant says. “The Greek affairs adviser was working with them to get a petition to join IFC.”

After its third attempt, Alpha Psi was recognized on campus as a fraternity chapter in 2002, about a year after gaining chapter status with the national organization. “The chapter has been very successful in integrating with the (inter-fraternity) council since then,” Van Sant says. “We’re just another choice within in the Greek community if you’re looking to go Greek.”

‘That fraternity’

Current Alpha Psi president Sam Windler says his fraternity has dealt with a lot of discrimination in the past but not during his time in charge.

“Historically, it has been a very hard road,” he says. Guffey says other fraternities have gone from actively opposing DLP to ignoring them but have since moved toward becoming partners in the Greek community.

Simon Foxall, a Kent State alumnus who graduated in 2005, says DLP was the best part of college for him. Foxall is a progressive brother — he’s straight, but he accepts his brothers regardless of their sexual orientation. One of the goals DLP promotes is gaining acceptance among other fraternities, meaning they don’t want to be known as “the gay frat,” but rather as just another fraternity.

“DLP helps just by existing,” Foxall says. “We are not a safe-haven for the gay community. Delta Lambda Phi is a group for all.”

He says changing perceptions on campus isn’t the main goal of the group. Socially active groups such as PRIDE!Kent take on more active community roles in that sense. Foxall says DLP isn’t out to change the world, but it still has visions for its members and its image. “It’s the goal for people to not go, ‘OK, that’s the gay fraternity,’” Foxall says. And Van Sant agrees. He had a feeling from the start that all it would take was time.

“One of the things that I always said when we were colonizing and shortly after we got recognition, was that in five years, the chapter in Kent would no longer be any flash point or issue of contention in regards to being the gay fraternity on campus because in five years everyone would just know it was on campus,” Van Sant says.
The advantages of youth

DLP is still building its legacy. While members of other fraternities have decades of history to fall back on, the national organization is just 23 years old, and Kent State’s chapter has only been around for eight. “We’re an extremely young fraternity,” Van Sant says, recalling an IFC meeting during which one group, founded in 1909, claimed to be the youngest.

But age does have its advantages. While an entire century of change and progress stands between brothers of older Greek organizations and those men who came before them, Guffey says Lambdas are closer to their roots and believe they’re more in touch with the ideas set forth by their founding fathers.

“We don’t tend to conform to the stereotype of what people think a fraternity is,” Guffey says. “A lot of that has to do with that we don’t have a house. We’re close enough to the original founding our fraternity was built upon to not have been lost.”

But Alpha Psi does face challenges with retention and recruitment of members.

“So you know Apple? Their slogan is, ‘Think different.’ That’s Delta Lambda Phi,” Guffey says, adding it’s been difficult to market a sometimes abstract concept to men who are rushing.

“Delta Lambda Phi is not a specifically gay fraternity,” Windler says. “We include anybody — any male who is capable of rushing. You don’t have to be gay, and you don’t have to be bi.”

But “you just can’t really be a homophobe,” Guffey adds. “We were founded by gay men for all men for the purpose of creating safe spaces for all people.

“If you put 40 of our brothers in a room, you would have not only members from all different walks of life, but members of the gay community that you would never think would hang out with each other,” Guffey says. “Cliques, stereotypes, all of those are broken down. Where else are you going to see a leather daddy and a queen hanging out with some jock, who’s straight and has a girlfriend? They’re all sitting around and having a good time. That’s our fraternity. Our fraternity has tended to be a fraternity for people who refuse to try and be like somebody else.”

★

DANIEL R. DOHERTY

(Left to right) Delta Lambda Phi Alpha Psi brothers Alex Young, Matthews Ruff, Sam Windler, Bryan Albright and Jason Troyer
THE ECONOMY SUCKS, BUT YOUR WARDROBE DOESN'T HAVE TO

PHOTOS: DANIEL R. DOHERTY
STYLING: JENNIFER SMAS
THE ECONOMY SUCKS, BUT YOUR WARDROBE DOESN’T HAVE TO

(From left) Candace Long white T-shirt dress by American Vintage (Brigade), black bra-cup dress by Scout (Brigade), shoes by Promise (Gabriel Brothers); Charlie Jeans by Cheap Monday (Brigade), shoes by Converse, top by Fink (Brigade); Sydney Top by Martini Skate+Snow, jeans by Social Distortion, pumps by Aldo; Dominick Top by Nomme de Guerre for Fruit of the Loom (Brigade), jeans by Cheap Monday (Brigade); Brenna Jacket by Morphine Generation (Brigade), top by Vans (Martini Skate+Snow), jeans by WESC (Martini Skate+Snow), shoes, vintage.
From left: Dominick 
Top, vintage from Einstein's
Jeans, vintage Wrangler's from Einstein's
Shoes by Converse
Dog tag, model's own

Matthew
WESC Headphones at Martini Skate+Snow
Sweatshirt, vintage from Einstein's
Jeans by Social Distortion
Shoes by Converse

Brenna
Vintage jacket from Einstein's
top, model's own
Jeans by Nikita (Martini Skate+Snow)
Pumps, model's own
Abby: Jacket by H&M, top by American Apparel; Charlie: Outfit, vintage from Einstein's; Candace: Top by Hanes, sunglasses, pin, vintage from Einstein's, Skirt by Mink Pink (Brigade); Jeremy: Top, vintage Dockers; Jeans by Cheap Monday (Brigade).
(From left) Dominick Nomme de Guerre Service shirt (Brigade), bow tie, vintage from Einstein's; shorts by Hyden Yoo (Brigade); Brenna Dress, vintage; Charlie Shirt by WESC (Martini Skate+Snow), tie, vintage from Einstein's; Candace Top by Cacico; Jeremy Top by Apolis (Brigade), tie, vintage from Einstein's, jeans by APC (Brigade).
Jeremy
Top by Apolis (Brigade), tie, vintage from Einstein's, jeans by APC (Brigade);

Charlie
Shirt by WESC (Martini), tie, vintage from Einstein's
Brenna Dress by H&M, tights by Rampage (Gabriel Brothers); Abby Dress, vintage from Einstein's, shoes by Converse.
Abby Tank by Scout Brigade; Candace Tank by H&M, leather skirt, vintage from Einstein's, shoes, model's own
WHERE TO BUY

MARTINI SKATE + SNOW
8266 GOLDEN LINK ROAD NO. 14
NORTHFIELD, OH 44067
330.655.0155
WWW.MARTINISKATEANDSNOW.COM

BRIGADE
1785 COVENTRY ROAD
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OH 44118
216.932.0700
CLOTHINGBRIGADE.COM

EINSTEIN’S ATTIC
115 CHERRY ST.
KENT, OH 44240
330.346.0673

CREDITS

HAIR ANGELIQUE FOR SKULLZ SALON
HAIR, MAKEUP JEREMY FOR SKULLZ SALON
MAKEUP LISA MILANI
PHOTO ASSISTANT LESLIE L. CUSANO

MODELS
JEREMY BROBSON, MATTHEW MCCLIMANS,
CANDACE BINGGELLI, ABBY KIDWELL,
BRENNNA MCNALAMA, SYDNEY SUSTARIC,
CHARLIE OLIVO, DOMINICK ARQUILLA

THANKS AARON RUGGLES AND LIBBY SMAS AT MAIN STREET BISTRO, DAN AND BILL AT BRIGADE, MIKE TIRPAK,
GRANT THOMPSON AND CODY SANDERS AT MARTINI SKATE + SNOW, ABBY SMAS, CHRIS SANS
Looking for Mr. Fabulous

Sara Scanes

When I finally decided I was coming to Kent State, the first thing I did was join the university’s network on Facebook.

The second thing I did was find myself a gay boyfriend on campus.

With the decision to come to college came the unfortunate truth: I would be leaving Tony, my gay boyfriend, behind (or, rather, in Cincinnati, since that’s where Tony was headed for school).

For those uneducated in the matter of gay boyfriends, a gay boyfriend is any sexy, savvy straight girl’s secret weapon. For the gay boyfriend is not only your best friend and the go-to gay for any sort of hair, make up or fashion emergency, but he’s also the best damn date when you’re without a straight boy to doll up and parade around with.

A gay boyfriend’s services include — but are not limited to — first-date planning, gossip and man-bashing, late-night calorie binges during “Sex and the City” rerun marathons on TBS and accompanying his hag to dances, formal events, office parties and couple’s holidays.

I knew I wouldn’t be able to properly function without a gay boyfriend, so it was absolutely crucial that I find myself one closer to my new home.

I logged onto Facebook and searched “interested in men” in the Kent State network.

The first boy that came up in the search looked young, but cute, and he liked the same shows and bands I did. Clicking “Add to friends,” I gave up my search. After all, you can’t have two gay boyfriends, so why try to court more than one? But a blond-haired boy was moderately receptive to my friendship. We exchanged instant messages, but we didn’t hit it off online.

I gave up my search. Rejection felt tough.

But when I came to Kent, I contacted my lukewarm Facebook friend to see if he wanted to get lunch. He agreed, and when I saw him walking toward me outside the Student Center in his “Where’s Waldo”-style polo, sparks flew.

I found him.

As time passed, he realized he had found his hag, and the boy I’d Facebook-stalked in March was now my gay boyfriend.

Now since I was a freshman in high school, I’ve had more boyfriends than I can count on two hands, but I’ve only had two gay boyfriends. Of the 15 dances I went to while I was in high school, I went to 10 of them with my gay boyfriend. For about half of those 10 dances, I had an actual boyfriend I could have taken.

Why didn’t I take my actual boyfriend? Well, like many modern advances in areas such as medicine and technology, the powers that be discovered the gay boyfriend.

He dances, and unlike the straight boys you could have dragged along after wrestling them into semi-formalwear, the gay boyfriend will dance without you begging and pleading and promising to put out. On top of that, he’s usually good at it.

He won’t argue about matching. If you’re wearing a teal dress, you can bet he’s going to find a tie the same color, much unlike my straight boyfriend sophomore year, who wouldn’t wear a pink tie to my homecoming. I tried and tried to get him in a pink tie, but he wouldn’t budge. He showed up in a purple tie and a pink shirt two sizes too big.

Your friends like him. While your actual boyfriend is a douche bag who treats you like crap — I mean, you did take a gay boy to prom over him for a reason — your gay boyfriend is on great terms with your friends. He’s so cute and fun that your friends might have forgotten you were there if your hand wasn’t linked with his.

There’s no gossip. I don’t mean that he won’t gossip, because that is hard to say. No, rather, no one will gossip about you and your date like they would have if you’d brought the mediocre-looking guy from work. There’s none of that “Are they dating?” “Are they sleeping together?” “Isn’t she mad that he’s dancing with other girls?” They all know he’s batting — more like pitching or catching — for the other team.

Even if you’re not taking your gay boyfriend to a formal event as your date, he’s got one up on most boyfriends in that he’ll remember your birthday and get you a gorgeous pair of silver sequined flats. He’ll bring you things when you’re sick, or really hungover. He’ll listen to you bitch without complaining, as long as you let him vent, too.

He’ll cuddle with you any time. He’ll tell you when you look fabulous, and he’ll tell you when you look horrific.

If I failed a test or a class, lost something important, got turned down for a role in a play, got dumped, got rejected by a college, got turned down for a job or made a big mistake, my gay boyfriend was always there for me.

Whether it was Tony, the dancing queen who preferred to play video games with my brother rather than accompany me on a shopping spree, or Nick, my newfound fag, who is relatively fluent in five or so languages and has blood that’s probably 90 percent Diet Coke, I have always been able to count on my gay boyfriend.

This March, Tony and I celebrated our fifth anniversary; Nick and I celebrated our one-year. So far, they are the longest relationships I’ve ever had.

And that doesn’t bother me one bit. ★
Kent State University’s most diverse magazine takes an award-winning approach to cover KSU’s most hard-hitting and controversial topics.

SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS MARK OF EXCELLENCE REGION FOUR AWARDS:

2005
First Place: Best Student Magazine
(published more than once a year)
First Place: Best All-Around Online Student Magazine

2006
First Place: Photo Illustration,
Pat Jarrett, “It Was All a Blur”

2007
First Place: Best Student Magazine

2009
First Place: Best Student Magazine
(published more than once a year)
Second Place: Non-Fiction Article
Ben Wolford, “A New Era”
Third Place: Non-Fiction Article
Sarah Steimer, “Anyone Can Come and Not Be Judged”

NATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION

2008
Second Place: Excellence in Student Journalism Award
Rachel Abbey, “On the Path to Domestic Partner Benefits in Ohio”
FEATURING TASTES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN!
HUMMUS, FALAFEL, GRAPE LEAVES, KIBBIE, TABOULI, SHAWARMA SALADS, SHISH KABOBS, KAFTA KABOBS, CHICKEN KABOBS, BEEF SHAWARMA SANDWICHES, CHICKEN SHAWARMA SANDWICHES, GREEK GYROS, CHICKEN GYROS, PHILLY-STYLE CHEESE STEAKS, BAKLAVA AND MUCH MORE!