TACKLING TRADITION
KSU looks to break its failing football cycle

Speed dating
Good (or bad) dates don't have to last all night

FUN THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT SEX

ADDERALL: The study drug sweeping campus
CCI Schools
The College of Communication and Information (CCI) is composed of four Schools and an interdisciplinary program in Information Architecture and Knowledge Management.

Communication Studies
The School of Communication Studies develops in students the knowledge and research skills that will enable them to function effectively in interpersonal, group, organizational and societal settings.

Journalism and Mass Communication
JMC prepares students to hit the ground running on air, on paper and online. The fully accredited program serves about 1200 undergraduate majors and pre-majors in nine major programs of study and 40 professional master’s students. Award-winning independent student media and required internships build on a curriculum geared toward today’s multi-media work environments.

Library and Information Science
The School of Library and Information Science offers graduate education to those individuals preparing for positions of leadership in librarianship and the information professions.

Visual Communication Design
The School of Visual Communication Design provides professional education that combines liberal education, knowledge of design and art history, and development of graphic design and illustration skills in print and electronic media.

News from the College of Communication + Information
IAKM prepares tomorrow’s info professionals
Institutional memory...information design...digital information...electronic networks...Information is power—but only if it is readily accessible, organized, analyzed and displayed to meet an information need. The Master of Science program in Information Architecture and Knowledge Management, housed in the School of Library and Information Science, prepares information professionals to develop and manage information interfaces, products, systems and services and to fulfill important roles in modern organizations.

Communication Studies offers new applied degree
The Applied Communication concentration prepares students for careers as communication specialists in non-profit organizations, small businesses and government offices. Students in this concentration take courses across the undergraduate offerings of the entire College of Communication and Information, including courses in organizational communication, high-impact public speaking, website development, writing, public relations, photography, videography and visual design.

FROM THE EDITOR
Diversity has always been a goal for The Burr, but it’s my personal goal to bring a new type of diversity to “my” issue. This semester we’ve introduced shorter department-style pieces in addition to the in-depth feature stories you’ve come to expect in The Burr. This issue is meant to entertain you, make you laugh, and, most important, make you think.

So whatever your mood and whatever you’re looking for, I’m sure there’s something in this issue for you.

If you just want a quick read on the way to class, check out Abbey Stigwalt’s story on speed dating or Andrew Gung’s satirical look at music stereotypes. For something a little deeper, Elise Franco’s story discusses the growing attention on Adderall and Jackie Manley reveals the ever-changing controversy surrounding beauty pageants.

It’s also my hope that the voices of those who are often unrepresented can shine through in this issue. From the international students adjusting to life at Kent State to the voice of Robbie Kirkland, whose tragic death has had an impact on so many for more than a decade.

Many hands and minds have gone into the production of this semester’s magazine, and it couldn’t have been done without each and every person. So thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue and to the amazing staff of editors who kept me sane.

Enjoy!

Jessica Lentine

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The Burr
Cover photo of Greg Keys
by Stephanie Blackstone

Adderall
More and more students are using the drug to focus. — By Elise Franco

Dating in a flash
The speed dating phenomenon works its way to Kent State. — By Abbey Stirgwolt

Tackling tradition
Kent State looks to break its failing football cycle. — By Joe Simon

(Fun) sex education
Things you may not know about that three-letter word.

Hangover helpers
Doctors offer tips for a hangover-free morning after a night out. — By Allison Bray

Trouble with plastic
Experts tell how to avoid rising credit card debt. — By Brittany Moseley

Old wives’ tales: fact or fiction?
Doctors explain common health myths. — By Jennie Hardenbrook

Your music, your stereotype
A satirical look at the stigma that often comes with different tastes in music. — By Andrew Gaug

Robbie’s legacy
When a 14-year-old boy commits suicide, his family begins a mission to honor him in life and death. — Brian Thornton

Supernatural sanctuary
Members of an unconventional church lend themselves as mediums to spirits and revisit past lives. — By Allison Remcheck

Miss Controversy
Pageant contestants tell their reasons for competing as the opinions of beauty competitions continue to change. — By Jackie Mantey

HPV: Deadly and symptom-free
What you need to know to protect yourself from the most common sexually transmitted disease. — By Jennifer Mussig

Living an Americanized life
Four international students discuss adjusting to life in America. — By Shelley Blundell

Dear Thornton,

As a Kent State student, I have noticed a significant increase in the use of Adderall among my peers. Many students are using this stimulant to enhance their focus and academic performance. While Adderall is prescribed for the treatment of ADHD, more and more students are turning to it as a means to improve their study habits, often without medical necessity. This phenomenon has raised concerns about the potential side effects and long-term implications of such widespread use.

I have spoken with several students who have shared their experiences with this drug. While many find it helpful in improving concentration and productivity, others report feelings of anxiety, insomnia, and dependence. Some have even experienced adverse side effects such as increased heart rate and blood pressure.

In light of these findings, I believe it is crucial for the university to address this issue and provide guidance on the responsible use of Adderall. Kent State should consider implementing educational programs to inform students about the risks and benefits of this medication, as well as the availability of support services for those who may be struggling with addiction.

Sincerely,

[Student’s signature]
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Cover photo of Greg Keys by Stephanie Blackstone

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Have a grape spring getaway
No need to travel far for good wine — there are more than 80 wineries throughout Ohio

Just a phone call away
Find out what it's like to work at Townhall II — Kent's mental health, substance abuse and crisis center

MEET THE PRESIDENT
A look into the life of Kent State's 11th president, Lester Lefton

The Burr
Spring 2007

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Health myths busted:
Because grandma isn't always right

Controversial beauty:
A new generation speaks out about beauty pageants

Cover photo of Greg Keys by Stephanie Blackstone

BURR.KENT.EDU SPRING 2007
happy hour

Hangover helpers

A throbbing head. A feeling of nausea. A dry mouth. These are just a few results of a night on the town. However, drinkers don’t always have to deal with the repercussions. Follow these tips and enjoy a hangover-free morning after.

Symptoms and their causes:

**Headaches:** They come from the body’s adjustment to a rapidly dropping blood alcohol concentration and dehydration. Alcohol dilates the blood vessels that surround the brain, which can cause headaches.

**Vomiting:** The body’s way of getting rid of toxins. Vomiting can also cause dehydration.

**Dehydration:** Signs of dehydration are dizziness, lightheadedness, thirst and weakness. It is partially to blame for headaches and nausea.

**Fatigue:** Alcohol disrupts sleep. It can work as a sedative and help aid sleep, but it affects the quality of sleep. Alcohol consumption causes a shorter REM (rapid eye movement) cycle, which is the dream phase of sleep. Elimination of this stage results in incomplete sleep. Even after eight or 10 hours, an individual can be fatigued and groggy.

Prevention:

*Eat before drinking.* Alcohol is absorbed more slowly when there is food in the stomach.

*Have a nonalcoholic drink between each alcoholic drink.* It will keep the body hydrated and help maintain a low blood alcohol concentration.

*Pace yourself.* The body can metabolize alcohol at the rate of approximately one drink per hour. Staying within this range will assist in maintaining a low blood alcohol concentration.

*Before going to bed, drink water or another nonalcoholic drink, but avoid caffeine,* which can also contribute to hangover symptoms.

*Take two aspirin before going to bed* and two more after waking if a headache is still present.

Source: Ray Leone, chief university physician at DeWeese Health Center, WebMD.com
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*Source: Ray Levee, chief university physician at DeWorce Health Center, WebMD.com*
A Message from the President

Dear Students,

It has been an action- and achievement-packed spring semester, filled with reasons to be proud of your membership in Kent State's student body. Here are just a few recent examples of student excellence in action:

- Visual journalism major David Foster was named Student Photographer of the Year by the Ohio News Photographers Association.
- Jill Kowalski earned two Mid-American Conference Gymnast of the Week awards and went undefeated in MAC all-around competition.
- The pass rate for recent Kent State graduates who took the professional licensure exam for architects ranked among the top 15 nationwide and was on par with graduates of Harvard and MIT.
- Kristin Tassone, a theatre major who is the first woman to complete a minor in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Studies, received the 2007 Akron Women's History Project's "Woman to Watch" award.
- Textile arts students helped create the beautiful shawl worn by Frances Strickland at her husband's inauguration as Ohio governor.
- And dozens of Kent State students devoted their winter and spring breaks to rebuilding homes ravaged by Hurricane Katrina.

I applaud these outstanding Kent State ambassadors, and all of you who are working diligently to complete the semester to the best of your abilities. You can be confident that your Kent State diploma will be a passport to exciting opportunities. I hope you will stay connected to your alma mater through our great Alumni Association, and through the unforgettable faculty and staff members who have been in your corner.

I applaud these outstanding Kent State ambassadors, and all of you who are working diligently to complete the semester to the best of your abilities. You can be confident that your Kent State diploma will be a passport to exciting opportunities. I extend special congratulations and best wishes to those of you who are about to graduate. You can be confident that your Kent State diploma will be a passport to exciting opportunities. I hope you will stay connected to your alma mater through our great Alumni Association, and through the unforgettable faculty and staff members who have been in your corner.

Whether you continue your studies, take a job or internship, or enjoy some R&R, have a great summer.

Lester A. Lefton
President

Trouble with plastic

It's just a little piece of plastic, but if misused, it can cause broke college students a lot of trouble.

Senior advertising major Jason Craig is dealing with the trouble credit cards can cause. He got his first card three years ago and is now working to pay off his debt.

"I had one card, and I recently got two more because the other one was maxed out," Craig says.

When he received his first card, Craig says he didn't have any problems, but he soon became caught up in its allure.

"At first it was no big deal," he says. "But when you don't know how to use a credit card, you get sucked in."

While credit cards can help build a financial reputation and are useful to have during emergencies, the number of college students with credit cards has increased — and so has their debt.

Todd Ronen, executive director of Young Money, and Scott Biller, creator of DebtDiet.com, offer their advice for preventing and managing credit card debt.

Before swiping your card, remember:
- It is important to pay off your balance each month. Always keep track of your account totals, especially before making major purchases.
- Don't rely on your credit card for every $2 or $3 purchase. Those small purchases are easy to forget about and quickly add up.
- When you're broke, don't buy anything. Treat your credit card like it's cash because for you, it is.

In debt: Now what?
- If in debt, first call your credit card company and ask if you can change your terms. If that doesn't work, try to find a credit counselor to help educate you on the fine points of managing your money.
- Get financially organized with old statements, receipts and balances. Negotiate with your bank to try to get lower rates.
- You always have leverage when you have debt because the bank is making money off your financial penalties, Biller says. Threaten to transfer your balance, and they will try to keep you.

Credit usage among college students

As students progress through school, credit card usage swells. In 2004, 91 percent of full-year students had a credit card, compared to 42 percent of freshmen. Fifty-six percent of full-year students carried four or more cards.

Full-year students carried an average balance of $2,864, while freshmen carried an average balance of $1,585.

The average outstanding balance on undergraduate credit cards in 2004 was $2,159, a 3 percent reduction from 2001 when the average balance was $2,327.

Credit usage among college students

Students from the Northeast had the lowest outstanding average balances, while students from the Midwest had the highest balances in 2004.

Seventy-six percent of undergraduates in 2004 began the school year with credit cards.

Undergraduates reported direct-mail solicitation as the primary source for selecting a credit card vendor in 2004.

Source: Neil I. Min, student loan company

— BRITTANY MOSELEY

Photo Illustration by STEPHANIE BLACKSTONE

KENT STATE STUDENT

$2864 $1626 $2169 $3537
DEBIT
10/10
Huntington
VISA
Photo Illustration by STEPHANIE BLACKSTONE

— BRITTANY MOSELEY

BURR.KENT.EDU SPRING 2007 7
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Source: Nellie Mae, student loan company
Week of October 14, 2007

Story by Elise Franco  Photo illustrations by Michele Roehrig

The attention of Adderall

A rising number of students are taking advantage of the effects and availability of the "new Ritalin"

Want some Adderall? Chances are, all you have to do is ask the person sitting behind you in class.

Illegal substances such as marijuana, cocaine and crystal methamphetamine aren't the only drugs commonly abused by college students. Adderall, a legally prescribed medication, has become popular for academic performance and recreational use among students without a prescription.

Adderall is a drug used to treat people who suffer from attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The pill stimulates the brain and allows the person to settle and focus.

"It gets their neurons to fire more together, so to speak," says Dr. Raymond Leone, chief university physician at DeWeese Health Center. "A true ADD person will have a desk full of things to do but does everything except for those tasks. Once they're off the meds, they're able to prioritize."

Jenna, a Kent State senior, suffers from ADD, and without her medication she can't concentrate on even the simplest tasks. Jenna's name has been changed, as well as the names of the other student sources in this story. "I never realized how much it helped me until after I took it. The day I got it, I took it and went to class," Jenna says. "I didn't realize until after the class was over that I paid attention the entire time."

"I used to doodle on my paper, and now I don't even do that anymore. It made a significant difference for me."

For users who don't suffer from ADD or ADHD, the effects of the drug are significantly different.

Brian, a Kent State junior, says he first took Adderall during his freshman year of college.

"I had my first big history essay exam, and I wanted to try it and see if it made me focus," he says. "It definitely worked, too. I studied for hours in the library, and I got something like a 97 on the exam."

Carrie, a former Kent State student, says she has used the drug recreationally as well.

"I took it for the first time in 2004, during my first semester at the main branch," she says. "I was told it would help me study, get better grades, stay awake and help me focus — and it did.""Now it's back in full swing, although it seems to be more underground than before," Adderall wasn't introduced to the market until 1996, Leone says, but another ADD medication, Ritalin, works in the same way.

"In med school, people would always be asking around for Ritalin," he says. "It was like the Adderall of my day."

Without giving it a second thought, students who need to pull an all-nighter may pop an Adderall with their Starbucks coffee and prepare themselves for hours of increased concentration, but many of them may not know that taking Adderall is risky, as with any drug.

Some of the more common side effects include loss of appetite, increased heart rate and blood pressure, insomnia, nausea and nervousness, Leone says.

In addition, rage and nervous tics may develop over time because the brain is so over-stimulated.

Carrie says she experienced many of those side effects after using the drug.

"When you're on it, you get really fidgety and talk a lot," she says. "Toward the end of the year, when your high is going down, you feel depressed and lose your appetite."

Carrie also described feeling depressed after using it over a longer period of time, and says...
A rising number of students are taking advantage of the effects and availability of the "new Ritalin"

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Leone says misuse of stimulant drugs, especially amphetamines, is not a new development and has been happening since the 1960s.

"For a while, we didn't hear about it much. Drug use was more mainstream in the '60s and '70s, and in the '80s it started fading," he says.

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In addition, rage and nervous tics may develop over time because the brain is so over-stimulated.

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Staying Awake: Caffeine vs. Adderall

**Caffeine**
- Caffeine is a stimulant used to treat drowsiness and cure headaches.
- Side effects include insomnia, nervousness, upset stomach, tremor, increased metabolism, increased heart rate and headaches.
- Regular daily use may cause withdrawal symptoms such as headache, anxiety or muscle tension within 12 to 18 hours.
- It can have an effect within 15 minutes after being taken.

**Caffeine Pills**
- One pill contains 200 mg of caffeine.
- The average age of people who abuse caffeine supplements is 21.

**Coffee**
- One 8-ounce cup contains about 83 mg of caffeine.
- Six or more bounce cups of coffee per day (500 mg) is considered excessive intake of caffeine.
- About 60 percent of Americans say they have a caffeine addiction.

**Energy Drinks**
- The amount of caffeine per serving varies by brand: AMP energy drink: 75 mg; Red Bull: 80 mg; Full Throttle: 144 mg; Sobe No Fear: 158 mg.

**Adderall**
- Adderall is a stimulant that regulates neurotransmitters in the brain.
- It is used to help you focus more once in a while.

**Side Effects**
- Side effects include loss of appetite, difficulty falling asleep, stomach ache, weight loss, dry mouth and headache.
- A single dose of Adderall is equivalent to two daily doses of Ritalin.

**Sources:** WebMD.com, DrugMMapClinic.com

- **Heather Vitale**

---

**Ad-Aware: Caffeine and Adderall**

### Caffeine

- A cheap and fairily easy drug to come across, especially on a college campus.
- "Probably in a large class you'll find maybe one out of five people who use it, so it's relatively easy to get," Carrie says. You usually need to know someone, though, because I don't know many people who want to around asking random people for it.

### Adderall

- A single-dose of Adderall is equivalent to two daily doses of Ritalin.
staying awake: caffeine vs. adderall

caffeine
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- it can have an effect within 15 minutes after being taken.

adderall
- adderall is a stimulant that regulates behavior and attention; it affects how the brain controls impulses by influencing the availability of neurotransmitters in the brain.
- side effects include loss of appetite, difficulty falling asleep, stomach ache, weight loss, dry mouth and headache.
- a single-dose of adderall is equivalent to two daily doses of ritalin.

energy drinks
- the amount of caffeine per serving varies by brand:
  - AMP energy drink: 75 mg
  - red bull: 80 mg
  - full throttle: 144 mg
  - sub no fear: 158 mg

the psychological clinic

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services are free for Kent state university students.

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It makes you feel strong and a little bit invincible, and young people tend to feel that way anyway.

Leone disapproves of using Adderall as a means of intoxication, however. He says some people will use it while they party, but when mixed with alcohol or other drugs, the effects of Adderall are intensified. "It makes you feel strong and a little bit invincible, and young people tend to feel that way anyway," he says.

Jenna says although she's never done it, she knows a lot of people who have taken the drug while partying. "I guess it makes you more messed up when you take Adderall and drink at the same time," she says.

Leone says this type of behavior is dangerous for several reasons. It may cause a person to engage in risky behavior, such as driving at unsafe speeds. It may also impair judgment or trick a person into thinking his or her reflexes are better than they actually are. "The escape from reality, party-until-I-drop part isn't good," Leone says. "The drugs are so powerful, yet subtle, that it can make you drop permanently."

According to the official Adderall Web site, 50 million prescriptions for the medicine have been written since 1996. Unfortunately, it's impossible to track how many people have used the drug for recreational purposes. "I'm afraid for people who abuse," Leone says. "We have to hope people don't get hurt while finding themselves. I just want people to use their heads."
It makes you feel strong and a little bit invincible, and young people tend to feel that way anyway.

Ehie Franco is a senior magazine journalism major. This is her first story for The Burr. Contact her at afranco@kent.edu.
It's slightly past 7 p.m. on a snowy Friday night in February. In the Rathskeller, rock music plays from a speaker in the corner of the bar where a lone student bartender leans casually against the counter and watches a basketball game on the television on a nearby wall.

A group of fraternity guys in jeans and white T-shirts practices on the stage for an upcoming lip-syncing competition. Under the spotlight they attempt the song, fail, retry, get a bit further and take a break for food. Then they get back to work.

Meanwhile, seated alone in a straight-backed chair and looking a bit on edge, a student fidgets aimlessly with a pen he is holding.

His sandy blond hair has been gelled and artfully messed up — a classic haphazard look that has likely taken at least 10 minutes to perfect. And that's not counting last-minute glances into the mirror on the way out.

Stuck to his tan corduroy blazer atop a red-and-blue polo shirt is a paper nametag — the "Hello, my name is" kind.

His name is Zack. He is number nine.
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From Hollywood to home

Speed dating. The concept has been popularized by Hollywood, debuting most recently on the silver screen in Hitch and 40-year-old Virgin. Speed dating allows numerous singles to meet by arranging timed "dates." Participants have a set amount of time — in this case, one minute — to chat with one another before moving to the next person.

Kent Student Center Programming began sponsoring speed dating events last year. The idea behind it was simply to encourage students to get to know one another, says coordinator Katie Wallace, a senior theater major.

During its debut last year, speed dating was a hit. "We had 60 people last year, but I'll be happy if we get 20 (this year)," she said. "We got a lot more guys last time than girls, which really surprised me."

Wallace said she had been pleasantly surprised by the turnout at the first speed dating event — she hadn't expected nearly that many. Though she wasn't hoping for such a high attendance the second time around, she credits the lower turnout to a couple factors.

"We had fewer people, but I think that was because it was on a Friday, and a lot of students go home on weekends. The first one was on a Wednesday, and it was great," she said.

Wallace and other members of the KSC Programming, looking considerably more at ease than the crowd of speed daters occupying tables around the room, take advantage of the complimentary spread that has been arranged at a nearby table by the Kent State catering service. Swedish meatballs, skewered tortellini, nacho chips with cheese and an array of vegetables with dip are on tonight's menu.

On more than one occasion, a group of two or three onlookers drifts through the door, unsure whether to stay or go.

That's when Amy Weissler, also a member of KSC Programming, offers some encouragement: "Speed dating, guys! Come on and join!" the junior exercise specialist major yells across the room.

Some drift toward the sign-up table, others drift away.

The ones who remain receive two items. The first is a blue raffle ticket for a "romantic gift set" to be given away at the end of the evening. The gift set includes various types of heart-shaped candy, Date Movie, a book titled "The Art of the First Date" and a game called The Love Lottery. The second item is a sheet of white paper designed to help participants organize their dates.

"Check 'yes' by the people you are interested in and 'no' by the ones you are not interested in," it states. "Feel free to jot down notes in the space provided. At the end, we will collect the sheets and if you and someone else like each other, we'll let you up!"

The setup

Zack Cline, a freshman integrated language arts major, occasionally glances shyly and furtively across the room at the other blue-and-white checkered tables and their occupants.

Next to him, a man in a navy blue T-shirt signs a drink from the bar in a clear plastic cup, occasionally pushing the ice cubes from side to side with his straw. His nametag reads "Jeff." He is number eight.

Most of the tables are empty, containing only a folded pink or red paper that has been placed upright in the center. The red and pink cards offer emergency conversation starters for those who may need it:

"Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

"What is your favorite word and why?

"If you won the lottery, how would you spend your millions?"

A group of girls chatters and giggles a few tables away. Excited energy seems to be emanating from their table — they're speed dating for fun, they say.

"I saw it in the paper, and I was like, 'Let's do it,'" says Ashley Daley, a junior integrated math major. "It would be nice if I got something out of it, but I don't expect to."

Freshman theater major Corrie Hindenberg agreed. "I think it'll be funny," she says. "40-Year-Old Virgin keeps running through my head."

In the film, Andy, played by Steve Carrell — the token 40-year-old virgin — is tricked by his co-workers into attending a speed dating session. The session turns out to be a failure when Andy has dates with a few less-than- reputable characters, and he and his friends duck out early.

Though tonight's date is not nearly as large-scale as the 40-Year-Old Virgin setup, the participants all, unlike Andy, seem to at least somewhat pleased to be here.

The date

About 7:30 p.m., Wallace kicks the event off with a friendly and active conversation:

"OK, girls, grab a table!"

The four girls head to booths on the far side of the room. Two of them decide to share a booth — a built-in "double date" for each gentleman.

In the balance things out, Wallace, Weissler and a couple other members of KSC Programming sit at tables as well.

And then the games begin. Wallace announces that each person will have one minute to socialize with the other "dater." Unsure of where to start, most of them turn to look at me, trying to look as nonchalant as possible and settle down at the closest booth.

The "scoping out" ritual can be felt, if not actually seen, throughout the 15 to 20 minutes of dating. Eyes dart quickly across the room from this booth to that table to that chair. Nervous fingers play with pens and fold the corners of the checklists.

"So, where do you see yourself in five years?"

"I see myself in prison," someone jokes.

Some of the participants are simply looking for something to do on a Friday night, not actually expecting to meet Romeo or Juliet. But it seems as if most come with a glimmer of hope. Cline, whose interests include writing and reading ("Hamlet," especially, he says), came only partially out of curiosity.

"I have nothing else to do on a Friday night," he says, and then pauses. "Plus, I'm kinda loney, too."

And then there's senior chemistry major Jo- van Thompson. "I was hungry," he says with a smile. "I work over in the post office, and I thought I'd come check this out."

The wrap-up

As the evening progresses, participants seem to become more at ease with one another. Conversation can be heard from the various tables as daters read through the questions on the cards and then begin their own conversations.

Of the gift bag. One by one, participants grab their coats and wander out the door. The bartender still stands behind the bar, watching the television. An occasional freeloader stakes a plate of meatballs from the pickled-over food table. The group of guys on stage seems to have perfected the lightning routine, and several have begun eyeing the food table as well.

Even though the turnout was lower than last year's event and it didn't seem that anyone was paired up, participants have — if nothing else — gained the experience of getting out of their comfort zones.

And, of course, it was something to do on a Friday night. ©

Abby StInstagram is a senior newspaper journalism major. This is her first story for The Burr. Contact her at astingrad@kent.edu.

Senior chemistry major Jovon Thompson gets to know a fellow speed dater in their one-minute dating session.

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The wrap-up

As the evening progresses, participants seem to become more at ease with one another. Cline, whose interests include writing and reading ("Hamlet," especially, he says), came by one minute to check this out. He says, and then pauses. "Plus, I'm kinda lonely, too."

And then there's senior chemistry major Jon van Thompson.

"I was hungry," he says with a smile. "I work over in the post office, and I thought I'd come check this out.

The wrap-up as the event comes to an end, participants seem to become more at ease with one another. Junior theater major Abbey Singewalt was a speed dating regular. This is her first story for The Burr.

"It would be nice if I got something out of it, but I don't expect to."

One by one, participants grab their coats and wander out the door. The bartender still stands behind the bar, watching the television. An occasional freeloader sneaks a plate of meatballs from the picked-over food table. The group of guys on stage seems to have perfected the lip-syncing routine, and several have begun eyeing the food table as well.

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And, of course, it was something to do on a Friday night.
Robbie’s LEGACY

When a 14-year-old boy commits suicide, his family and friends transform their pain into a mission to help others.

If Robbie Kirkland walked into his room after the 10 years he has been gone, he would find his books, toys and even his clothes in the same place he left them. But his room feels empty, like a museum display, because Robbie Kirkland — who would have recently turned 25, perhaps recently graduating from college to become a writer — won’t be coming home.

Ten years ago, on Jan. 1, 1997, Robbie left his stepfather and mother’s house in Strongsville, a Cleveland suburb, to spend the night at his father’s nearby Lakewood house. The next morning, 14-year-old Robbie took his father’s FBI service gun from the locked, old-fashioned breadbox where he stored it. He climbed the stairs to the attic, lay down on a mattress and pointed the gun to his head.

No one heard that gunshot. Not his father, John, who was showering downstairs. Not his sleeping sister Danielle. In fact, no one knew what Robbie had done until two hours later, when Danielle went to look for him. By that time, Robbie was dead.

No one heard that morning gunshot, but to Robbie’s family and friends, to the thousands of people who would learn his story, that lone gunshot and the tragic end to his short life would ring out, sending echoes that transformed the lives of those who could not forget the handsome, promising young man who was in such pain he took his own life.

**Storyteller**

Leslie Sadasivan’s welcoming face and hospitality disarm listeners as she tells the story of her son’s life and death.

She smiles often, speaking with genuine love for her children and unambiguously citing with affection when describing her husband, Peter. But as friendly and upbeat as she appears, she admits to a low-level depression that has shadowed her life since Robbie committed suicide.

**Right**: Although it has remained mostly unchanged in the 10 years since his death, there have been a few careful additions to Robbie’s bedroom. While marching in the Cleveland Gay Pride Parade in 1997, an organizer handed this sign to Leslie and said, “You should have this one.”
Robbie’s LEGACY
When a 14-year-old boy commits suicide, his family and friends transform their pain into a mission to help others

Robbie Kirkland’s bedroom has barely changed in the 10 years since he last slept there. The twin bunk beds are still made, the mattresses draped with sky blue comforters and piled high with stuffed animals. Hanging above the top bunk, a St. Ignatius High School poster covers the feminine wallpaper — Robbie didn’t mind the hearts left behind when he inherited his sister’s room. The bookshelves at the foot of the beds are crammed with Dean Koontz and Christopher Pike novels, the kind of suspense stories that entertain teenage boys.

If Robbie Kirkland walked into his room after the 10 years he has been gone, he would find his books, toys and even his clothes in the same place he left them. But his room feels empty, like a museum display, because Robbie Kirkland — who would have recently turned 15, perhaps recently graduating from college to become a writer — won’t be coming home.

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Robbie had only a few friends at the all-boys St. Ignatius High School and experienced constant bullying and teasing. Matt, one of the few friends he had, says, "I know that geometry class was pretty difficult for him ... 'Faggot' would come out. It was pretty common there."

In the moment, when she tells his story, she’s fine. But in the days after an interview or a speech, the grief returns. Still, she accepts as many opportunities as possible to talk about Robbie. "The truth is, I don’t want to stop honoring his memory," she says.

Robbie Kirkland was a happy, blond-haired child who loved to play with LEGOs and Cabbage Patch dolls. He read mysteries and fantasies. Although his parents had divorced when he was just 6 months old, both his parents, stepfather and three sisters cherished him. "He was loving, very sweet," Leslie says. "A little shy, sensitive. Very funny. He had the best sense of humor."

Everyone who describes Robbie mentions his humor — dry and witty, the funniest person in the room. And everyone also mentions his sensitivity.

He was 7 years old the first time his parents took him to therapy to help him deal with teasing at school, Leslie says. But through the years, he came home with a bloody nose or torn clothes on several occasions. His sister Claudia, who was three years older, would see kids picking on Robbie on the bus and "from their grade school, Incarnate Word Academy."

"He did have a lisp, which I remember him being teased about," she says. "He didn’t like sports and wasn’t very good at them — things that made him different. I think that’s what most kids are teased about."

Gym days were the worst, Leslie says. Robbie would feel sick in the morning, and then be better when gym class was over. "There were clues, and we just didn’t get them," she says. "In seventh grade, the clues were more apparent."

That was when a boy punched Robbie in the locker room, and another boy pushed him and called him names. "I picked him up, and he was crying in the car," Leslie says. "But I remember thinking that there was more to this."

That missing element was the secret Robbie had been harboring — he was gay. "I think so many sites there that did help him. Gay sites where he could be out." A few weeks later, around Robbie’s February birthday, Peter found gay pornography on the computer. "That was probably where everything changed, and all the information became more available," Leslie says. "We asked him, of course, if he was gay."

Robbie denied it, crying as he told a tale that someone was blackmailing him, and he was forced to save the files on the computer. Leslie was concerned, she says, because Robbie was acting unlike the boy she knew. But still, she had no idea how troubled he was. Days later, he wrote a short suicide note, which he signed, “Robbie Kirkland, the boy who told himself put on a smile, shut up and pretend you’re happy.” Then he swallowed dozens of Tylenol pills.

The next day, Chicago police called, saying Robbie had turned himself in.

But Maria, the family’s housekeeper, found the clue that something much worse was going on. While searching Robbie’s room, she discovered the earlier suicide note in which he again denied being gay. Armed with the information, Leslie and John took Robbie to a therapist the morning, John brought him back from Chicago. "I told him that if my son is gay, I wanted him to know that I didn’t want him to change my son," she says. "If he couldn’t support him, I would find a different counselor."

In Robbie’s young life, he had met gay and lesbian people before, including Leslie’s friend David Kushing. But it was clear that being gay wasn’t OK to Robbie — it seemed to shatter his dreams of being a father and having a family.

His friend Becca Sando remembers a day at summer camp, the year before he began high school, when Robbie told offensive gay jokes to a group of campers. "I think he was trying to feel us out to see how we would react," she says, "and we blatantly failed the test."

Leslie tried to provide Robbie with support. She got literature from Kushing and offered to take him to a gay youth group. "He just wasn’t ready to go," she says. "Now that his secret was out and he was in counseling, the immediate crisis seemed over."

High school was approaching, and Robbie was determined to go to a good school. He had ambitions of becoming a writer and decided St. Ignatius High School, an all-boys Catholic school on the west side of Cleveland, was the right choice.

St. Ignatius, Leslie says, offered Robbie a fresh start after the torment of his grade school.

"He thought that because it was so large, he could go unnoticed," she says.

But his sisters were concerned. "We went to an all-girls high school, and we knew guys at Ignatius," Claudia says. "There were a small percentage of guys at that school who were open-minded." The rest, she says, had a "heightened sense of masculinity."

Spiraling down

That fall, St. Ignatius turned out to be a poor choice for Robbie Kirkland — the teasing continued.

"He definitely changed physically," Claudia says. "He lost so much weight, his skin looked horrible. He was stressed out all the time." Becca, his friend from camp, stayed in touch through letters and phone calls. "He didn’t really say much about his school life," she says. "I know that he didn’t have a lot of good, close friends, and I know he had a hard time."

One of Robbie’s friends from St. Ignatius, Matt, who asked that his last name not be

Right: Robbie’s bedroom offers static memories of the handsome, promising young man who would have recently turned 25.
"It's hard to live through, it really is," she says. "Life is such an effort since he died."

In the moment, when she tells his story, she's fine. But in the days after an interview or a speech, the grief returns. Still, she accepts as many opportunities as possible to talk about Robbie.

"The truth is, I don't want to stop honoring his memory," she says.

Funnest person in the room

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That missing element was the secret Robbie had been harboring—he was gay.

"Throughout all of his life, he made efforts to fit in," Leslie says. " Pretending to like girl, trying sports."

Everything started to come out in eighth grade. For Christmas, Leslie and her husband Peter bought a computer, which thrilled Robbie. They signed up for an online service, and Robbie spent hours in the spare bedroom, surfing the Web and chatting with people he met there.

"Back then, I don't think there was all this information about watching children and the dangers," Leslie says. "He found so many sites there that did help him. Gay sites where he could be out."

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The secret

In the night, Robbie vomited up the pills, and the suicide attempt remained a secret for weeks. But the crisis intensified in March, when Robbie suddenly vanished.

He had continued surfing the Internet, and one morning he took off for Chicago on a Greyhound bus to meet a man. Once his parents realized he was gone, Robbie's father, John, used his FBI connections to search for him. At 1 a.m. the next day, Chicago police called, saying Robbie had turned himself in.

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One of Robbie's friends from St. Ignatius, Matt, who asked that his last name not be
Robbie Kirkland's death could have been one family's quiet tragedy if not for the grief that threatened to swallow Leslie.

The earlier suicide attempt was one sign. Leslie admits she doesn't have the same happiness she had before Robbie's death. His family and friends still express regret and sorrow they didn't see the signs, and some chose to leave the Catholic Church. But for those touched by Robbie's short life, his death has had a pronounced good, too.

Matt, who had never met a gay person before, says, "I'm really thankful for the patience that God gave me because he opened my eyes that the homosexual wasn't this 'other,' this 'menace.' He's spoken to youth about how language hurts.

Robbie's sister Claudia became a child therapist and speaks to students about suicide. Becky Sordo has helped Leslie put together robertkirkland.com, a Web site that celebrates Robbie's life and offers young people resources.

The local 'chapter of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network is recruiting scholarship in Robbie's name to help a gay or lesbian youth go to college.

And in 10 years, Leslie has never stopped telling Robbie's story. He has spoken at conferences, written the New York Times, ATY, a magazine for young gay men. She testified before the Ohio General Assembly, asking legisl­ators to pass a bill protecting gay and lesbian youth from school harassment. And three years ago, St. Ignatius finally invited her to speak at the school's Day of Silence, which is a national protest against gay rights and heaven.

Leslie says she will always work to ensure something positive comes from Robbie's death. The basic good — the really basic, basic good, if you look at his message, she says, which teared in her eyes, "he asked us to pray for him, to remember him."

"If you look at all of this, it's our way of remembering him," says Leslie. "And not just remembering him as this dead person but as this real, living person that cared about people, that was kind, that was gentle, that was compassion­ate and that would want to help others, especially those that are like him.

She worries the message will be lost because Robbie has been gone for so long that young people can't relate to him. And she questions, sometimes, whether it has been right to have his name attached to so many of the efforts.

"It was never about his story; it was about what his story represented," says Leslie. "That's the one thing from the start that was so important to me. It's not about Robbie Kirkland — it's about the kids like Robbie."

"Brian Thornton is a graduate student in Chagrin Falls. This is his second story for The Burr. Contact him at bhorriz@kent.edu.
Leslie began finding an audience. "Going public, I had to make a decision of how much to share about his story, because he's dead, but still, I know that he would not want everyone to know, especially about the things he did, like going against our will," Leslie says. "The gentle, sweet boy that he was."

"At any rate, I saw the higher good that it could bring by telling his story, so I did."

The first time Leslie stood before an audience to tell Robbie's story was at the Cleveland Pride Parade after his death. "It was a wreck, my hands were shaking," she says. "It was awful. It was H-E-double-L."

She looked out into the crowd and saw John, Danielle and Claudia, all of whom were crying. "I just tried to feel Robbie," she says. "And of course the emotion of seeing all that, and that poor Robbie wasn't there, and that he didn't get the chance to be out as this gay person, that he couldn't see this future that all these people were living by being out—it was overwhelming." That year's Pride Parade was dedicated to Robbie Kirkland.

Echoes
The only person whose pain ends with a suicide is the victim. Family and friends are left to deal with the repercussions.

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Top: A constant tension existed between Robbie's faith and sexuality. "Had he not believed Matt, who had never met a gay person before," says, "I'm really thankful for Robbie Kirkland because he opened my eyes that the homosexual wasn't this 'other,' this menace." He's spoken to youth about how language hurts.

Above: The local chapter of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network gives a yearly award to a gay youth program. And in the corner rests a picture of a rainbow with the words, "Remember me, Robbie Kirkland," a gift from a local drag queen who organized a benefit to support youth who struggle with sexual identity, Robbie's mother says. "You should have this one." The sign says: "I love my son." She says she will always work to ensure the message will be lost because Robbie has been gone for so long that young people can't relate to him. And she questions, "Why is he never about his story? It was never about his story; it was about the kids like Robbie."

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Supernatural sanctuary

Unconventional believers find a home in Kent’s First Spiritualist Church, lending themselves as mediums to spirits and revisiting past lives.

On Sundays at 1 p.m., cars park in the backyard of the First Spiritualist Church of Kent. The structure fades into the corner of Oak Street — half forgotten, half hidden. The white, wooden clapboards are weathered. Falling leaves from surrounding trees are colored red and yellow.

As the congregation enters, the stairs to the front porch creak like a haunted house, but on the inside, nothing is spooky. On the contrary, all is light.

About 25 people, most more than 30 years old, sit on white plastic lawn chairs set up in front of an altar strong with silk sunflowers and white Christmas lights. The word “peace” is poignantly in the center. Portraits of angels hang in gilt frames on either side of the chairs, and ethereal meditative music sounds from an unknown source.

The congregation is called to stand and sing the hymn “Higher Ground” a cappella, chuckling as they try and fail to reach the high Cs and E flats.

“We’re getting there,” says the Rev. Kiah Kand Kyanko as everyone sits back down, still laughing.

To an outsider, the First Spiritualist Church seems eccentric but still similar to other Protestant churches. Their differences emerge. Although the members believe in the Bible and God, they don’t believe in heaven and hell. Jesus is only a teacher, not a savior.

Spiritualists say they use the powers of their minds to commune with spirits and create their own destinies.
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Several members of the church say they are mediums — they can use telepathic powers to see more about a person. Some say they are psychic and can predict the future; others say they can help channel past lives.

They believe in palmistry, astrology and tarot. They believe physical lives end, but the spirit never dies, and, therefore, they can communicate with loved ones even after death.

This is how they express their beliefs in worship and in conversation:

At the service continues, the Rev. Edna Heacock takes the pulpit and begins to speak about dying, which she says there is no reason to fear:

"I cannot separate my soul from God," she says. "I cannot separate my soul from God."

Heacock leads the congregation to repeat after her:

"I am a part of God and he approves of all I do — spiritually."

"I am a part of God and he approves of all I do — mentally."

"I am a part of God and he approves of all I do — physically."

"You are God," she says. "You are your own creation. You are fulfilled with the light of that creation."

"The concept of never dying is an idea Spiritualists reinforce, and one that is meaningful in Kyanko, who was raised Catholic and spent four years in seminary studying to be a priest."

But something was missing.

"I've just noticed I've been a bit psychic all my life," he says.

And when he was introduced to a Spiritualist circle in 1976, he began to understand why.

He attended a home psychic circle every week where a Spiritualist minister in Cleveland taught him how to channel the spirits.

"I sat every Saturday night with this lady for over a decade," Kyanko says. "I had the experience of seeing spirits. I've had the experience of talking to my body."

"By this, Kyanko means he would see visions of other people coming to him. While meditating, his spirit has left his body, and he has been able to view it from afar.

Our spirits leave our bodies frequently, Kyanko says, especially while dreaming.

"We just leave our bodies and go into the spirit world somewhere," he says.

Ten years ago Kyanko was ordained as a minister. It takes several years of studying the religion to be ordained, and while Kyanko says he has never met a minister who wasn't also a medium, he doesn't believe it's a qualification.

Kyanko says he likes to be aware of what he is saying when interpreting messages from the spirits for other people, but it doesn't always happen.

"When I walked in, I had an immediate sense of comfort," she says. "I was crying when I got home because for once, I found a church that believes like I do."

Twelve years ago, Carroll decided to open herself back up to the spirits, and because she belongs to the Spiritualist church, other members have helped her to keep them.

"I get all these images," Carroll says. 

The minute I stand up to give messages I'm open, and I'm on and it comes through just like that."

The rest of the time, Carroll puts a wall up around herself; otherwise, she would interpret spirits around everyone she sees.

Everyone has the ability to see spirits, Carroll says, but they close themselves off.

"When people say, 'I could have sworn for just a moment I saw somebody,' it could have been a spirit they've actually seen, she says. Spiritualists live their lives with the ultimate

"I had the experience of seeing people. I've had the experience of seeing my body."

"As a consequence, they met me in a dark alley and stabbed me one night."

Ramona Carroll is another member of the church who has strong ties with spirits and is studying to become a Spiritualist minister. She says she has had the gift to see spirits since she was a child. While growing up, her imaginary friend was a man who died during the Civil War, and she says she could see the tears in his uniform.

When Carroll was 6 years old, she lived with her mother in a top-floor apartment. As she lay in bed at night, she could hear a tricycle riding back and forth above her head from the attic and sometimes calling her name.

"I screamed and ran to the attic to see what the noise was."

When Carroll told what she saw, her mother thought he could rent the apartment to them.

"I've just noticed I've been a bit psychic all my life," he says.

One night Carroll grew so curious she crept up, Carroll says. "I cannot separate my soul from God," she says. "I cannot separate my soul from God."

She hung from the rafters with a rope around her neck.

"I saw the tricycle coming right at me," Carroll says. 

After Carroll told what she saw, her mother Kyanko, who was raised a Catholic and spent four years in seminary studying to be a priest. said she has had the gift to see spirits, avoiding them for years.

"I'm not always someone who will say, 'That's not true,' and, 'I don't believe in this at all.'"

While she agrees Spiritualists isn't for everyone because not all people are comfortable communicating with spirits, Carroll says not to discount it.

According to the National Spiritualist Association of Churches of the United States of America, the Spiritualist Church was founded in 1848 in Hydesville, N.Y. Two girls, known as the Fox sisters, heard tapping noises in their home, which they said came from a spirit seeking assistance. Afterward, the girls said they were able to communicate with other spirits and gave performances across the United States. Their spiritualist movement claimed 1 million followers by 1885.

At the pulpit, Heacock instructs the congregation to accept these spiritual visions.

"We open," she says. "We willing to listen. We willing to learn. You may be surprised what you first."

Then it is time to speak with the spirits.

The congregation stands to sing "Sweetly Falls the Spirit's Message."

"Ever do we bid thee welcome, their love to us."

Members of the Kent Spiritualist Church typically sing two or three songs during a Sunday service.

"Yes, although they don't believe in heaven and hell, they do believe in good and evil and some form of Karma: What goes around comes around. Good deeds will be reciprocated, as well as bad deeds or anything done with malicious intent.

"Spiritualism has really had to prove itself," Carroll says. "You'll always have someone who will say, 'That's not true,' and, 'I don't believe in this at all.'"

"I have the experience of seeing people. I've had the experience of seeing my body."

"I get all these images," Carroll says. "I get these images of other people coming to him. While meditating, my spirit has left my body, and I have been able to view it from afar."

"We just leave our bodies and go into the spirit world somewhere," he says.

"I lived in the palace with my wife and three children," Kyanko says.

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The service wraps up, and the members of the congregation leave the small church to head home. The service is over, but most of the members have been given a message to put them through the week — spirits and all.

Allison Renchez is a magazine journalism graduate. This is her second story for The Burr.

Left: The Rev. Fran Seymour, the Rev. Edna Heacock and the Rev. Merry Ann Clark sing 'My Favorite Things' during a service at the Kent Spiritualist Church.

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But something was missing.

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And when he was introduced to a Spiritualist circle in 1976, he began to understand why. He attended a home psychic circle every week where a Spiritualist minister in Cleveland taught him how to channel the spirits.

"I sat every Saturday night with this lady for over a decade," Kenyan says. "I had the experience of seeing my body.

By this, Kenyan means he would see visions of other people coming to him. While meditating, his spirit has left his body, and he has been able to view it from afar.

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Ten years ago Kenyan was ordained as a minister. It takes several years of studying the religion to be ordained, and while Kenyan says he has never met a minister who wasn't also a medium, he doesn't believe it's qualification. Kenyan says he likes to be aware of what he is saying when interpreting messages from the spirits for other people, but it doesn't always happen.

"People tell me later how beautiful it was," he says.

Kenyan says he has had many past lives, and in some of them he wasn't a very good soldier, and they didn't appreciate the way he treated them.

"As a consequence, they sent me in a dark alley and stabbed me one night.

Ramona Carroll is another member of the church who has strong ties with spirits and is studying to become a Spiritualist minister. She says she has had the gift to see spirits since she was a child. While growing up, her imaginary friend was a man who died during the Civil War, and she says she could see the tears in his uniform.

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One night Carrol grew so curious she crept to the attic to see what the noise was.

"I peeled over the bedding, and I distinctly saw a woman standing on a tricycle," Carroll says.

She was 5 feet 6 inches tall. One hundred eighty pounds. Blue eyes. Hair in a bun. She wore a short-sleeved, blue, button-up dress, White flats.

The woman hung from the rafters with a rope around her neck.

"I saw the tricycle coming right at me," Caroll says.

Her Carroll told her she saw her mother panicked and told the landlord. Sure enough, he had been unable to rent the apartment because one that had hanged herself in the attic. Carroll and her mother were now to town and didn't understand what happened, so the landlord thought he could rent the apartment to them.

They never went back.

When Carroll realized how strange her mother's reaction was, she stopped sharing stories of what she saw and tried to block out the spirits, avoiding them for years.

Carroll was raised Lutheran and has been at the Spiritualist church for about five years. For years I always tried different churches," she says. "I never really found anything I clicked with.

A friend took her to her Spiritualist church in Kent.

“When I walked in, I had an immediate sense of comfort," she says. “I was crying when I got home because for ones, I found a church that believes like I do.”

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"I lived in the palace with my wife and three children."

Incidentally, the woman who was Kenyan’s wife in the time of Nero is also living in this lifetime, he says.

One day he saw her and "just knew it was her."

As a general, Kenyan was very hard on his
FIRST MONTH’S RENT FREE!

very few units available for Fall so hurry in now! (rent by-suite or by bedroom)

CLOSEST TO MOST CLASSES!

FREE gas, sewer, water, trash | new state-of-the-art computer lab, high speed internet | new state-of-the-art fitness center | heated outdoor swimming pool | basketball court | remodeled fitness center with volleyball court (dog friendly environment) | across the street & I-77 | 24/7 security deposit and first months rent fee with qualifying credit approval

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very few units available for Fall so hurry in now! (rent by-suite or by bedroom)

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Old wives' tales: fact or fiction?

...because grandma isn't always right

Ever wonder if eating chocolate really causes acne or if going outside with wet hair really causes a cold? These and similar adages have been passed down from generation to generation as old wives' tales. Some have been around since 7000 B.C., but are they true or simply myths?

Osteopath Steven M. Takacs, owner of Newbury Family Practice, and neurologist Deborah A. Reed of American Migraine Center separate fact from fiction.

Feed a cold, starve a fever

"I have no idea where that one came from," Takacs says. "But I can't think of a good reason not to eat." When people have an illness, they usually don't have much of an appetite. Proper nutrition is important to maintain the immune system.

"I don't think that there is any basis on which you can support this. Feed the patient and use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for the fever," he says.

Wait an hour after eating before swimming

"The idea would be if you're eating, you have more blood going to the gut and then less blood going to the muscles. Supposedly, you're going to get cramps," Takacs says. "But from a scientific basis, that shouldn't happen, although you probably shouldn't swim right after eating when you're likely to have less stamina if you want to swim a long distance."

A migraine is just a bad headache

"No, there's definitely a difference," Reed says. "There are physiologic changes happening with the migraine — the changes in the blood vessels, the neurotransmitters released and the electricity in the brain."

Migraines are a neurological disorder. There is no cure for migraines; however, these are prescription medications for the symptoms, such as Imitrex.

Too much loud noise can cause hearing loss

The repetition of loud noises can cause sensory hearing loss. The louder it is, the quicker it can cause damage. With people who are truck drivers for a long time, the left ear almost never hears as well as the right ear, Takacs says, "because the left ear is the closest to the window, hearing all the traffic and engine sounds."

If you go outside with wet hair, you'll catch a cold

"Three things are necessary for an infection: adequate amount of virus, an acceptable host and a route of transmission," Takacs says. People have more colds in the winter because they're in more closed spaces and there's more exchange of respiratory droplets, he says.

"We're back to that acceptable host. If you're well-rested, well-fed and your immune system is operating at a high level, you're good. Someone who is a smoker and an alcoholic, they're more likely to get sick."

Chocolate causes acne

"That one you learn in medical school," Takacs said. "Supposedly it doesn't."

But in practice it seems the doctors see a lot of people where there's a correlation. "If a person feels like it's making things worse, I wouldn't hesitate to say, 'OK, stay away from chocolate."

Spicy foods cause ulcers

Bacteria or increased acid can cause an ulcer, Takacs says, and stressful situations and acidic foods can aggravate it. He says people often confuse spicy foods with acidic foods, which is where this myth may have come from.

"I think probably part of it is people just think, 'oh, if it's spicy, it must be irritating,'" he says. "Because if you touch a hot pepper and touch your eye, it's going to irritate it so, therefore, it must do the same thing in your stomach."

"The truth is that milk could potentially cause more aggravation of an ulcer," Takacs says. "People drink milk to coat the stomach, but the calcium in milk increases the production of acid."

— JENNIE HARDENBROOK

Burr.KENT.EDU SPRING 2007
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BUrn KENT.EDU SPRING 2007
making noise

Your music, your stereotype

Writer Andrew Gaug offers a satirical look at the stigma that often accompanies different tastes in music.

Rap aficionado

Usually found with an entourage of friends, clad in a fitted hat with the sticker still on, wearing the latest line of Nike, LRG or BAPE clothing complemented with white-on-white Nikes or Timberlands. Often found in the club layers, rocking or walking it out. A quick look through his CD collection will find flavor-of-the-month rappers such as Jibbs and Minaj, forgotten one-hit wonders such as J-Kwon and Murphy Lee and mainstream hip-hop leaders such as 50 Cent, Chingy and Nelly. Often following the trends, there's rarely an artist who has a long-term career. The rap aficionado is more interested in what gets the party going than a rapper's longevity.

Pop princess

Everyone loves a great pop song, whether it be from the eighties such as ABBA, populer 90s group Boyz II Men, or more recent acts such as Justin Timberlake. But then there are those who love pop music. The type that fills their AIM and MySpace profiles with inspirational quotes from Beyoncé and Paris Hilton, worship Jay Chike and dream about Usher and Pharrell. She is the type who made Kelly, Fergie and JoJo famous by buying their CDs for one or two songs. These pop princesses continuously support mainly vapid artists who come straight off of the pop artist production line and on to the radio.

Indie kid

If you won't a good ego check, tell an indie kid your taste in music—the verbal attack you'll receive will sting for weeks. Usually appearing as a pop-punk fan with a more refined taste in clothing, indie kids often gather in groups to discuss and rip apart each other's latest music discoveries. To them, The Shins were good until Garden State came out. Modest Mouse sold out by getting popular with "Float On." Death Cab for Cutie and The Postal Service were deemed until they started selling albums. An indie kid's newest music quest to be satiated with a music artist for longer than a month or so is usually unfulfilled as the artist either fades away or does the unthinkable and gets discovered by a large audience. But it's all shrugged off, for every Death Cab there's another Pinback, Voxtrot or Explosions in the Sky waiting to be discovered.

Metal head

Metal heads are like indie kids except with overly long hair and stained Levis. If you ask a metal head what's metal, you're almost guaranteed to get a different answer from each person. For some, it's prog-rockers such as Rush or Dream Theater. For others it's scream rockers such as Norma Jean or The Red. Still others prefer newer metal bands such as Disturbed Escape Plan or Mastodon. Some still cling to metal legends such as Motorhead or Pantera for their head-banging needs. One way to get a metal head to put his horns down for a second is to call Linkin Park, System of a Down or recent Metallica metal—you are sure to generate dirty looks. While most metal heads channel their insecurities through the screams and intricate riffs of metal, they have a surprising amount of confidence when defining what constitutes the genre.

Hip-hop head

The antithesis of a rap aficionado. Can often be found dreaming of the days when sugar was sprinkled on cardboard and the 80s took center stage. Though his tastes may not be as deeply rooted in legends such as Run-D.M.C and Grandmaster Flash, he still focuses on lyrics-based rapping with something to say. Think the ghetto-drama stories of The Clipper, the eclectic sounds of Outkast or K-Ok or the deep thoughts of Mos Def or Nas. Occasionally he will admit to liking cross-over rap stars such as T.I. or LL Wayne, but it's usually few and far between.

Pop-punk rocker

The trendiest of them all. Usually following the band has the hottest group member— Blink 182 trumps Green Day. My Chemical Romance trumps The Used, Panic! At The Disco trumps Fall Out Boy and All-American Rejects trumps Good Charlotte. Girls resemble either a Hot Topic model or the same type of female who would've been found screaming at a Backstreet Boys concert a decade earlier. The guys often wear tight pants, swoop their hair across their eyes and start their own band by rearranging the same 7 or 8 chords Green Day and The Ramones have been using for decades. Punk pioneers such as The Stooges, The Clash and The Buzzcocks are often shunned because their music lacks the pop sheen, and their band members look like New York City street buggars. Eyeliner is optional but is encouraged for extra scene points.
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Your music, your stereotype

Writer Andrew Gaug offers a satirical look at the stigma that often accompanies different tastes in music.
Chase Morris, a freshman offensive lineman, makes a cold trip from the training room to the field house for a spring training session.

A large portion of Kent State's student body wasn't all who heard it. Kent State football coach Doug Martin had been listening to it for years. So had Athletic Director Laing Kennedy.

It had been the subject of sports-talk radio, a topic on discussion boards on the Internet and a university-wide rumor for a decade.

"Why isn't Kent State going to dump the football program?" fans and media would ask. "The university just needs to focus on basketball."

And the criticism didn't come in the absence of good reasoning.

The Golden Flashes' football team has captured just a single conference championship in its 55 years in the Mid-American Conference (the last in 1972 when NFL Hall of Fame linebacker Jack Lambert played on the team). The team holds the same number of one-win seasons as winning seasons (seven), and before that '72 season, the last time Kent State entered a bowl game was the 1954 Refrigerator Bowl (yes, it really was a bowl).

Recent seasons weren't much different with Kent State sporting a 31-101 record during the past decade. The program reached a low point in 2006, Martin says, as the team went 1-10 despite high expectations.

Then came the 2006 season. How quickly things can change.
Kent State looks to break its failing football cycle with new determination and a new attitude

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Then came the 2006 season. How quickly things can change.
Kennedy says the idea of terminating football "was never talked about here. I'm sure it was outside of the program, but never in here." His calls are now directed toward a student body that may not understand how a successful town can substantially benefit Kent State.

**Keeping the faith**

Martin worked vigorously to instill a positive mindset when he was hired in 2004 (slightly after former coach Dean Peas departed for a job in the NFL). the problem, he admitted, was the negative attitude that weighed Kent State football down beyond his realm of control.

"It wasn't just the players," Martin says. "Everybody had this negative feeling or thought that Kent State was something other than what it could be. And getting through that is difficult." So Martin embarked on a journey to change Kent State, maintaining that focus "without a doubt. But Martin says he started to see signs of his determination paying off in the off-season. The players witnessed how passionate he was about making this a winning team, he says, and they began to rally behind him.

"Our team just seemed to be bonding together," he says.

The relentless attitude emanating from Martin wasn't just by chance. Martin knows as well what it takes to transform a losing team into a winning one. He experienced change firsthand as a player at the University of Kentucky and then as an assistant coach at East Carolina University.

"I went to my coach's first year (at Kentucky), and the next two years we actually went 0-10-1," Martin says. But Martin says he started to see signs of his determination paying off in the off-season. The players witnessed how passionate he was about making this a winning team, he says, and they began to rally behind him.

"Our team just seemed to be bonding together," he says.

The attitude the players exhibited at the '04 spring practices was one which Martin had never observed before — "no when he chose to hold every practice outside in the snow, something few coaches attempt. But the Carnegie didn't show right away. The Golden Flashes started the season 0-2, and another season of struggles seemed inevitable for Kent State. Then came a turning point, Martin says. Strangely enough, it came in a loss.

The Golden Flashes suffered a heartbreaking 17-14 overtime loss to Army in their second game of the year. Kent State tied the game late in the fourth quarter, but a fumble early in overtime set up Army's game-winning field goal.

"That was about as low as I'd ever been in my three years here because I really wanted that game for our kids," Martin says. "We played a great game at Army. We played with passion, we played with intensity; it was hard-fighting. It was fast — we just didn't win."

"When we got back that night, we had a meeting in the locker room. I told them I had a vision in my head of what I wanted our team to look like and today was the first time that team showed up. And I think they believed me and knew that what I was telling them was from the heart."

The following week, the Flashes beat MAC-rival Miami on the road in another close contest. And the victory ignited the team to five straight wins.

"These two right there really made us," Martin says. "We had been in a lot of close games but hadn't won them. There's something about close games that goes down to the wire that really pulls a team together."
Junior receiver Coleman Lynn works hard during off-season months. Sophomore receiver Garner spots in background.

Coach Tobias Jacobi, Matt and Shawn Donaldson, Josh Perry and J.D. Lumley share a laugh at the Kent State field house during a 7 a.m. lifting session.

"And I saw how he did that," Martin said. Former head coach Steve Logan of ECU, Pirates losing seasons in 10 of their 12 years. Martin coached, they jointly took team to winning seasons. "At rebuilding) took longer - about four years - is about the same pace we're here," Martin says. "I know it (the turnaround) not going happen overnight. But I know if you are at a place like East Carolina, you do it here."

Martin says he attained mindset not when something bad happens to keep the "vision" he imagined for the program paramount in his mind. As the season was for retaining that focus, it was easy. But struggles seemed imminent meeting in the locker room. I told them I had a vision in my head of what I wanted our team to look like and today was the first time that team showed up. And I think they believed me and knew that what I was saying was true.

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Summer receiver Phil Garner spots him in the background. Right: Coach Tobias Jacobi, Coach Matt Horton, and players Shawn Donaldson, Josh Perry and J.D. Lumley share a laugh at the Kent State field house during a 7 a.m. lifting session.

"We never gave up," Martin said. "When we got back that night, we had a
Sustaining success

As excited as Martin is about last year's success, maintaining that progress is his goal. And he makes sure his team knows that, too.

"That is the issue right now," Martin says. "And I throw it in the players' faces every day — that everybody is expecting them not to be around this year because that's been the trend here. So I don't try to duck that. I don't try and hide it — put it right in their face and I make them embrace that fact."

A big step in that process was bringing in quarterback Julian Edelman. A junior college transfer, Edelman earned the starting job after returning starter Michael Machen was injured. Edelman wasn't highly recruited out of high school because of his height — about 5 feet 11 inches — but Martin says he's a perfect fit for Kent State.

"Being able to add Julian Edelman made a huge impact," Martin says. "He's the perfect fit for our team because Julian plays with a chip on his shoulder. A lot of people overlooked him in recruiting, and he carries that around."

The team embraced his attitude, Martin says, and Edelman says one reason he knows the team won't cling to last year's success is because the losses are the games that stick out.

"We really don't have anything to be complacent over," says Edelman, who says he never heard about the struggles of Kent State because of his lack of proximity — he's from Redwood City, Calif. "I mean, 6-6 might be good for the old Kent, but we're new out here. Guys are going to think about the Ball State loss and the Ohio loss and the taste that it left in our mouth after we lost and were eliminated from first place in the MAC."

If football wins, KSU wins

A first-place finish in the MAC would be unprecedented for a program that was on a roll from ESPN.com of teams most likely to make the Toilet Bowl two years ago.

But as Kennedy says, Kent State could flourish in many more areas that may not seem as apparent.

"We were becoming a national story because we were one game away from a bowl. We were starting to get on the national radar," he says of last year's success. "The marketing experts who teach it and practice it on this campus say that's a difficult price tag — you can't buy it. What that should transfer into is more of everything — student enrollment, student retention, areas that hit the university's priorities.

"We need to be a significant part of President LeFleur's strategy for enrollment and retention."

Another example of how the team's success can help the university is by attracting potential contributors, he says.

"Before every home football game, the president is entertaining major prospects and donors for the university," Kennedy says. "And if they come in on a weekend like the Akron weekend, and we have a great environment, great crowd, great student attendance, suddenly more people want to come back. While they're back, let's talk about the needs of the library... and stuff like that.

"Athletics has to become more pro-active in that strategy with the university vision."

Martin pointed out the impact the basketball program has created and how the football team can generate the same type of atmosphere.

"That happened, although, the Golden Flashes can't be one-year wonder. They have to come back this year and do even better, Martin says.

"We have a great window of opportunity this year," he says. "If we're complacent and think it's just going to happen because we want it to or because we had a decent year last year, then it won't happen. We've got to outwork people again. We've got to pay the price just as heavy as we did last year, and I think they're doing that."

Kennedy says he's not ready to say the Gold-en Flashes "have turned the corner," but he's noticed drastic improvements.

"It was a hard, slow change — kind of like turning the Queen Mary around in the harbor," he says.

Martin says he's had enough with the bad attitudes and off-the-field issues of the past, and he's ready to bring the ship home.

"I'm not going to try and hide from the history of Kent State football because it doesn't have anything to do with me, and it doesn't have anything to do with these current players," he says. "So there's no sense in worrying about that and there's no sense in worrying about other people talking about that. You can change all that. Go out and win a MAC championship this next year and all that will change.

"You have to get a vision of what you want this place to look like and don't take your eyes off it. Don't look at what it is right now, just keep looking at what it's going to be, and sooner or later you'll get there. We're almost there."
Sustaining success

As success, maintaining that progress is his goal. And he makes sure his team knows that, too. "That is the issue right now," Martin says. "And I throw it in the players' faces every day—that everybody is expecting them not to be around this year because that's been the trend here. So I don't try to duck that, I don't try and hide it—it put it right in their face and I make them embrace that fact."

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"Athletics has to become more pro-active in that strategy with the university vision."

Martin pointed out the impact the football program has created and how the football team can generate the same type of atmosphere. For that to happen, though, the Golden Flashes have to become more pro-active in recruiting, and he carries that on his shoulder. A lot of people overlooked him in recruiting, and he carries that around."

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Dan Hartman

Above: Dan Hartman (left), a red-shirt freshman defensive back, and Andy Jayjack (right), a red-shirt sophomore running back, lift at the Kent State field house. Left: Andrew Tudor, a freshman running back, fills out a training log during a lifting session in the Kent State field house. The football team uses inspirational quotes to get through daily workouts.
As the debate over beauty pageants continues, two students have found ambition and poise through these competitions.

Vaseline is administered to the teeth. Duct tape, safety pins and bobby pins are securely in place.

Months of preparation and sleepless nights led to this one moment.

Nerves, excitement and sheer adrenaline fill the women who will be standing on stage — but the Vaseline and a lot of practice keep their lips from changing to the eager position of expectation their nerves really want their lips to make.

A crown sparkles in the distance like the Holy Grail of future opportunity.

And each woman waits.

The names are announced, and one by one, the contestants' faces shift from learned smiles to ones of real disappointment.

Then there are two.

One will hold the title and don the crown. One will need to be satisfied with first runner-up.

"There is nothing better than getting to the two final girls, hearing the other girl is the first runner-up, then having everyone cheer for you," says Marianna Hewitt, an enthusiastic pageant competitor who received her highest award by being named Miss Teen Galaxy 2006.

Beauty pageants, scholarship pageants — whatever you want to call them — grace everything from the pages of American history books to blogs in today's Internet world.

Pageants were a popular target for the women's movement and the subject of Sandra Bullock's hit, Miss Congeniality. Many famous women have titles sitting on their resumes beside Oscars, Emmys and various career achievements. Many also have them on their list of no-no's for a society of equals.

Pageants have been an institution of creativity or controversy for decades, depending on how one looks at it. A new generation of feminists is forming its own opinions about beauty pageants. These critics struggle with the positives and negatives of the competitions. For those competing, however, the pursuit is for the crown, the title, the opportunity and the experience.

Left: Miss Teen Galaxy 2006 Marianna Hewitt displays one of the crowns she keeps in her room. The sophomore broadcast major is working toward competing in the Miss Ohio preliminary.
Story by Jackie Mantey  Photos by Elizabeth Meyers

ONTROVERSY

As the debate over beauty pageants continues, two students have found ambition and poise through these competitions.

Left: Miss Teen Galaxy 2006 Marianna Hewitt displays one of the crowns she keeps in her room. The sophomore broadcast major is working toward competing in the Miss Ohio preliminary.

Vaseline is administered to the teeth. Duct tape, safety pins and bobby pins are securely in place.

Months of preparation and sleepless nights led to this one moment. Nerves, excitement and sheer adrenaline fill the women who will be standing on stage — but the Vaseline and a lot of practice keep their lips from changing to the eager position of expectation their nerves really want their lips to make.

A crown sparkles in the distance like the Holy Grail of future opportunity.

And each woman waits.

The names are announced, and one by one, the contestants' faces shift from learned smiles to ones of real disappointment.

Then there are two.

One will hold the title and don the crown. One will need to be satisfied with first runner-up.

"There is nothing better than getting to the two final girls, hearing the other girl is the first runner-up, then having everyone cheer for you," says Marianna Hewitt, an enthusiastic pageant competitor who received her highest award by being named Miss Teen Galaxy 2006.

Beauty pageants, scholarship pageants — whatever you want to call them — grace everything from the pages of American history books to blogs in today's Internet world.

Pageants were a popular target for the women's movement and the subject of Sandra Bullock's hit, Miss Congeniality. Many famous women have titles sitting on their resumes beside Oscars, Emmys and various career achievements. Many also have them on their list of no-no's for a society of equals.

Pageants have been an institution of creativity or controversy for decades, depending on how one looks at it. A new generation of feminists is forming its own opinions about beauty pageants. These critics struggle with the positives and negatives of the competitions. For those competing, however, the pursuit is for the crown, the title, the opportunity and the experience.
Marianna Hewitt: A model student

Marianna Hewitt can't count the number of pageants she's been in on two hands. She had been Miss Junior Teen Ohio, Miss Ohio Teen USA, First Runner-Up, Miss Teen Ohio Galaxy winner and several other runner-up positions and "almosts." The title she is most proud of is the title she was given last year: Miss Teen Galaxy 2006.

"Winning is the greatest feeling in the world," the sophomore pre-journalism major says. But it took time, desire and money to get where she is.

"Lots of money! You cannot do it without proper financial support," Hewitt says. "There is pageant coaching, interview coaching, personal trainers, stylists, hair, nails, tanning, traveling to other pageants to watch and see girls in person, wardrobe, everything."

She has a pageant coach in Detroit whom she visits once a month. When time creeps to only a few months away from the pageant, Hewitt drives to see her coach every weekend, where she gets help with walking, interviewing, physical stance and stage presence. She and her coach must even agree on her wardrobe. Not a detail is missed.

While her pageant coach lives north, Hewitt travels east to New York City to visit her interview coach.

"He is amazing," she says. "He really teaches you to think on your feet and answer without thinking about it."

Most of the pageants Hewitt competes in are modeling-based. The pageant requires an interview, along with eveningwear and swimsuit modeling. The last two parts of the competition are the most nerve-racking, she says. To compensate, she has a personal trainer when she lives at home and works out in the morning.

"It's the preparation and practice that count," she says. "I'm so busy," she laughs. "I have to start early."

The 19-year-old is a Delta Gamma and lives with two of her sisters who also compete in pageants. She says it is nice to have the support of her roommates because they understand why a busy social life is hard to fulfill sometimes.

The black-haired, dark-eyed, dark-skinned half-Vietnamese, half-Italian can't be described as anything but striking. The trips to Detroit and lessons on enunciation have trickled down to every aspect of her life, she says, mentioning that she finds it easier to speak in public and in class because of her training.

That combination of looks and hard work led to her winning her competitions. The most incredible experience of her life, she says, came when she was crowned the winner out of all the competitors from around the world after traveling through preliminary competitions.

As a part of her winnings, Hewitt says she has been able to make numerous connections with talent agencies and celebrities.

Angela Funovits: It's magic

Angela Funovits' story is a little different. The current Miss Maple City first runner-up admits that competing in pageants has one large attraction, she says. "There are a lot of reasons to participate, but the scholarships are great," says the 19-year-old integrated life sciences major and NKU/CMH student who is working her way to med school to become a physician. She says the money she earns through pageants can definitely help foot the bill.

Miss Maple City is a part of the Miss America System, which is renowned for the large amounts of scholarship money it provides its victorious competitors. There are 22 local preliminaries throughout the state of Ohio whose winners go on to compete in Miss Ohio. The Miss Ohio winner then goes on to compete for the title of Miss America.

This pageant circuit has judging portions for talent and onstage questioning, along with swimsuit, eveningwear and interview. During the interview, each contestant is asked to speak about her "platform." This is in cause that the contestant would work to support and promote if she wins the title.

The interview and the talent portions comprise the highest portion of a contestant's total score. Funovits found a way to combine them.

When she was in elementary school, Funovits' life changed. Her older brother had been killed in a car accident. "I was incredibly shy, I started to do magic to get comfortable in front of people," she says. "I'm largely self-taught."

"I would check out books from the library when I was little and not return them because I didn't want other people to learn my tricks," she jokes.

The Avon Lake native has gone on to perform in front of Masonic Auditorium and Performing Arts Center, Nashville Radio Cafe and Cleveland Petrus, but there is one audience that captivates her the most.

In high school, Funovits volunteered at hospitals around Avon Lake and would perform magic tricks for patients waiting in pre-operation rooms to help them relax before surgery.

"It was then that I realized my magic could help make a difference in someone's life," she says.

Soon after, Funovits started Seraphim One Outreach. The program addresses the psychological needs of the cancer community. She works to pull together area magicians to perform in hospitals for cancer patients and their families.

"Performing for those gives me purpose," she says. "Taking someone at such a difficult point in their life andempowering them is so fulfilling for me."

Funovits says she decided to use Seraphim One Outreach as her platform. As Miss Teens Cleveland, she was able to nationally promote "Using Magic to Achieve Holistic Healing," which focused on the goals of Seraphim One.

"With a (pageant) program as far as promoting a program," she says. "If you have a crown, everyone is waiting for you to do something."

Miss America pageant winners also have a big responsibility to work extensively with their platform during the year of their reign, she says. Funovits says the circuit's dedication to service is important to her and a good argument for the stereotype that pageants are pointless.

An estimated 12,000 young women participate in some circuit of Miss America Organization at state or local levels. In 2005, the organization's total awards given to competitors at state and local organizations in the form of cash or scholarship assistance totaled about $4.8 million, according to its Web site.

Contestants performed 1,354 community service projects in 2005. The total number of hours recorded for those service projects was 57,177.

Funovits says the many pageants she has competed in have made her a stronger, more confident person.

"It's amazing the way it can help you grow as a person," she says. "And if I can put myself up on stage in a bikini and walk around — I can do anything."

"Bra Burners" Versus "Cattle"

In 1968, the Miss America beauty pageant was an American institution. It was a tradition. Female competitors showed their strengths in cooking, cleaning and looking beautiful in a baking suit, and the public embraced these depting beauties.

That same year, second-wave feminism ignited in the pageant.

Women's liberation activists protested outside the arena in Atlantic City where the Miss America contest was held. Their goal was to show how all women were hurt by Miss America and similar beauty competitions.

And to make their voices heard, the fem­nist's decided it was war — of the activist sort.

Protesters held by hand the board­walk. A crown and sab bagclaiming "Miss America" adored a live sheep. Stiletto shoes, bras, makeup and hair curlers were pitched onto a raging fire.
Mariana Hewitt: A model student

Mariana Hewitt can't count the number of pageants she's been in on two hands. She had been Miss Teen Ohio, Miss Teen Ohio Teen USA, First Runner-Up, Miss Teen Ohio Galaxy winner and several other runner-up positions and "almosts." The title she is most proud of is the title she was given last year: Miss Teen Galaxy 2006. "Winning is the greatest feeling in the world," the sophomore pre-journalism major says. But it took time, desire and money to get where she is.

"Lots of money! You cannot do it without proper financial support," Hewitt says. "There is pageant coaching, interview coaching, personal trainers, stylists, hair, nails, tanning, traveling to other pageants to watch and see girls in person, wardrobe, everything."

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When she was in elementary school, Funovits looked at the "show business" as a way to work and promote school activities. It was the fun of a pageant that convinced her to pursue the career.

"I'm shy, so I started to do magic in front of people," she says. "I'm largely self-taught. I would check out books on the about, or do magic tricks. I was in second-grade when I did my first magic trick at a church show."

As Cleveland, she was able to nationally promote a local pageant and use it to help other students get a education. She says, "If you have a crown, everyone wants to use it to make a difference in someone's life." She says.

After, Funovits started Seraphim Outreach. The program addresses the psychological needs of the cancer community. She works to pull together area magicians to perform in hospitals for cancer patients and their families.

"Performing for those gives me purpose," she says. "Taking someone's at such a difficult point in their life and empowering them is so fulfilling." She says.

Funovits says she decided to use Seraphim Outreach as her platform. She was able to nationally promote "Using Magic to Achieve Holistic Healing," which focused on the goals of Seraphim One.

"If a person who is doing magic can be a part of that, I think it means something," she says. "I'm doing my best to use my magic to let people know that it's okay to use it to make a difference in someone's life." She says.

Funovits poses with her playing cards she uses in her magic tricks. The 19-year-old has been performing magic and modeling for almost ten years.

Angela Funovits: It's magic

Angela Funovits' story is a little different. The current Miss Magic City first runner-up admits that competing in pageants has one large attraction. "There are a lot of reasons to participate, but the scholarships are great," she says. "I'm really interested in the service aspect of the pageant." She says.

"While we don't get scholarships in Miss Galaxy, I'm making steps toward a possible career," she says. The current Miss Magic City first runner-up admits that competing in pageants has one large attraction. "There are a lot of reasons to participate, but the scholarships are great," she says. "I'm really interested in the service aspect of the pageant." She says.

"I'm doing my best to use my magic to let people know that it's okay to use it to make a difference in someone's life." She says.
Puppet America

"Ain't pageants these things where women are domestic and insidiously happy with staying in the home as they did in the 1960s, they now play on the message that attractive women will be more successful in life, Costa says. And it's not a message found to be incorrect."

Wasting Energy?

Watt's Up with that?

To share an energy saving tip, report energy waste or for more information, contact Campus Environment And Operations Energy Management email: energy@kent.edu

Jackie Mantey is a junior magazine journalism major. This is her second story for The Burr. Contact her at jmantey@kent.edu.
“Women in these pageants are not ugly. They are not overweight. They are not the average American woman.”
Get vaccinated

Gardasil: The controversy

In January, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an immunization recommendation that by the age of 11-12, girls should receive the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, Gardasil.

Sarah Adams, pediatrician and section chairman of pediatrics at Robinson Memorial Hospital in Ravenna, says although the vaccine is recommended for women between the ages of 9 and 26, in practice, the target age is 11 to 12 years old.

The CDC's recommendation has left lawmakers in a dilemma requiring the vaccine to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and future cancer cases or leave the decision up to the discretion of parents.

"There's controversy because some people view it as a permission slip to become sexually active," Adams says.

Cost is another factor prohibiting widespread approval of the vaccine.

Although many insurance companies are recognizing the vaccine, Adams says without help from insurers, the three-shot series during a six-month period costs $110 to $130 per shot.

To help make the vaccine available for low-income and uninsured families, Kristopher Weiss, a spokesperson for the Ohio Department of Health, says the department has distributed more than 44,000 doses of the vaccine through the federal Vaccines for Children program.

Because of its recent release, Adams says the long-term effectiveness of the vaccine is still uncertain, but to be on the safe side, booster shots have been recommended.

— Jackie Valley

A recent study completed at Washington State University shows that 1 in 10 female college students is infected with HPV.
HPV: Deadly and symptom-free

About 20 million Americans have genital human papillomavirus, and nearly 6 million new cases are diagnosed each year. Of that number, about half of those infected are between 15 and 24 years old.

In August 2006, Melissa Keenan requested an STD test when she went in for her yearly doctor’s appointment. She was surprised to find out she’d tested positive for HPV, which causes genital warts and, in some cases, cervical cancer.

After finding out she had HPV, Keenan, an alumna of Youngstown State University, says she spent some time researching the virus and learned that it is the most common sexually transmitted disease. “I was so scared; I didn’t know what to do,” she says. “How do you get it? How do you get rid of it? It’s contagious.”

Tests, tests, tests

Keenan says she saw her doctor every two months for Pap tests, and they all came back abnormal. Pap tests that are abnormal don’t necessarily mean a patient has HPV — a low-level infection or infection unrelated to HPV could result in an abnormal Pap. Multiple Pap tests and an HPV DNA test, which can detect the 13 types of HPV most commonly found in cervical cancer, can also be administered, according to the CDC.

Keenan says the first biopsy was done to determine how many cell layers deep the abnormal cells penetrated and whether they were pre-cancerous or cancerous. In all cases, moderate to severe abnormal cervical cells need to be removed.

“Once you cross over that threshold, you need to get those cells out,” Clinger says. “They can turn into something bad.”

Keenan's experience was similar to that of the Pap tests, Keenan’s biopsies kept coming back irregular. After five colposcopies in a year, Keenan says the doctor decided to do a large surface biopsy. The result: Stage 1 cervical cancer.

“It was probably caught the earliest you could,” Keenan says.

After being diagnosed, Keenan had surgery to remove the cancerous tissue. She says the doctor removed most of her cervix, cutting out about an inch and a half. “I had to look it after,” Keenan says. “I just had to. It’s so graphically unappealing.”

The doctor left just enough for the cells to regenerate so her cervix could grow back.

An early defense

Keenan jokingly laments that Gardasil, the first vaccine to prevent cervical cancer caused by HPV types 16 and 18, came out too late for her. The Food and Drug Administration approved the vaccine in June 2006.

According to the CDC, if a woman has already been exposed to strains of HPV, Gardasil won’t protect her from that particular strain. Because women can be infected with more than one type of HPV, Gardasil will protect her from the types she doesn’t have.

Because HPV has no symptoms, the infected person can pass it on unknowingly. Clinger says studies show that HPV is found on the skin around the genital area and can be transferred by touch, so people don’t need to have sex to spread the virus, but a study by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists found that consistent condom use decreased the spreading of HPV by 70 percent.

That’s enough of a decrease that it’s worth to use a condom, Clinger says.

A positive attitude

According to the CDC, about 50 percent of women diagnosed with cervical cancer are between 35 and 55 years old. These women were probably exposed to high-risk types of HPV while in their 20s, and because it went unrecognized, the cells became cancerous.

Keenan’s situation was a little different. She discovered she had cervical cancer a year after finding out she had tested positive for HPV. “That freaks you out,” Keenan says of how she felt after learning she had cervical cancer. But through it all, she remained positive. “If you could pick a good cancer, that’s probably the best you could have,” Keenan says. “You have to look on the bright side — glass half full. There are so many worse things that could happen to a person.”

It was that positive attitude that helped Keenan finish her last year of school. She missed a lot of classes, but says she was honest with her professors and informed them of the situation. In May 2006, she graduated with degrees in chemistry and biology.

Melissa Keenan, 22, tested positive for HPV, developed cervical cancer, had it surgically removed and is now living cancer-free.

HPV: The controversy

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Although many insurance companies are recognizing the vaccine, Adams says women without help from insurance, the three-shot series during a six-month period costs $120 to $130 per shot.

To help make the vaccine affordable, the Ohio Department of Health, says the department has distributed more than 334,000 doses of the vaccine through the federal Vaccine for Children program. Because of its recent release, Adams says the long-term effectiveness of the vaccine is still unclear, but kids who are being offered booster shots have been recommended.

— Jackie Valley

Gardasil: A recent study completed at Washington State University shows that 1 in 5 female college students is infected with HPV

Jennifer Mussig is a senior magazine journalism major. This is her first story for The Burr. Contact her at jenmussig@kent.edu.
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Living an Americanized Life

If you think college is hard now, try studying in another country.

Story by Shelley Blundell  Photos by Heidi Weber

Today, more than 500,000 people from around the world are pursuing higher education in the United States. Natalie Barrett, Tianan Zhong, Fu-Chih Lai, and Antoine Boucheniet are four of them—all studying at Kent State University. Their reasons for attending Kent State are as diverse as the cultures each one comes from, as are their experiences. While these students have found things in common with their American peers and with each other, there are many aspects they acknowledge will always be different.

We’ll let them explain.

Fu-Chih Lai — Prescription for progress

Fu-Chih Lai has had almost seven years to adjust to life in the United States, but there are many things he misses about his life in Taiwan.

“The only nightlife here is to go to the bar or the dance,” Lai, 37, says of the after-hours Kent scene. “In my country, there are bookstores open 24 hours—some are bigger than your department store. You can spend all night in the bookstore, if you want.”

Originally from Hengchun, a small town in southeast Taiwan, Lai moved to Ohio in 2000 to pursue a master’s degree in nursing at Case Western Reserve University. Lai completed the program in 2002 and moved on to the doctoral program in nursing at Kent State.
Today, more than 500,000 people from around the world are pursuing higher education in the United States. Natalie Barrett, Herman Zhai, Fu-Chih Lai, and Antoine Beauchemin are four of them—all studying at Kent State University. Their reasons for attending Kent State are as diverse as the cultures each one comes from, as are their experiences. While these students have found things in common with their American peers and with each other, there are many aspects they acknowledge will always be different.

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Originally from Hengchung, a small town in southeast Taiwan, Lai moved to Ohio in 2000 to pursue a master’s degree in nursing at Case Western Reserve University. Lai completed the program in 2002 and moved on to the doctoral program in nursing at Kent State.
Lai says the mix of people and culture in Taiwan is much more diverse than any he has encountered in Ohio. When Lai first started studying in the Buckeye State, he went home at the end of every semester. However, he started to make friends in Ohio, and last September—marking the first time in three years Lai had returned back home to Hengchung. Despite the cultural differences, one thing Lai feels all people have in common is an underlying sense of compassion. Lai completed his bachelor’s degree in nursing in Taiwan and went on to serve in the Taiwanese army in its conflict with China during the late 1980s. He learned many lessons in humanity during his army days and again later, when serving in emergency services in Taiwan.

"All people in the world have some universal value," Lai says. "No matter what country you are from, everybody wants to live in a good environment — your environment can change, and it may not allow you to express mercy, but you still have it."

When he completes his doctorate later this year, Lai will return to Taiwan to pursue his nursing career, having no desire to seek employment in the United States.

"In nursing, the United States has the best nursing education system, the best nursing care system in the world," Lai says. "But if I consider my career development, I will get better development in Taiwan."

Lai has had the opportunity during his stay in the United States to make friends with people from many backgrounds. "I have friends from New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. He says he enjoys the peaceful world of the United States.

In 1974, a Hungarian inventor developed The Magic Cube and released it to Budapest toy shops. It was released worldwide in 1980 as the Rubik’s Cube. Since then, different versions have been invented to test user skills.

Hula Hoop
Egypt and Australia
"Hooping" originated in ancient Egypt and was adopted by countries throughout the world. In the 1950s, an American toy company named Wham-O invented "hooping" after being introduced to twirling hoops in Australia. Because of the imitation of the popular Hawaiian dance, Hula Hoops were born.

Vending Machines
Egypt
In the first century, a Greek engineer invented a machine that dispensed Holy Water after a coin was placed in the slot. In the first United States, vending machines were built in 1880 to sell gum. Since then, nearly anything can be found in various machines, including candy, beverages, condoms, and medicine.

"I was worried, but I fit in right away," says Barrett. The sophomore marketing major credits her swift adjustment to her teammates, many of whom are international students as well. The American teammates do everything they can to make the international girls feel welcome, Barrett says, often inviting them home for holidays such as Thanksgiving.

"A huge benefit for me was I came into a new team with 19 new best friends," Barrett says. "I was given a life. Lots of internationals come over here and have nothing." Barrett, who spoke English at home, also acknowledges the difficulty the language barrier and difference in culture can play for some international students trying to adapt at life at Kent State.

"There are a lot of American traits in Britain, but everything here is so much bigger and vast," Barrett says. "It’s a huge benefit for me was I came into a new team with 19 best friends," Barrett says. "I was given a life. Lots of internationals come over here and have nothing." Barrett, who spoke English at home, also acknowledges the difficulty the language barrier and difference in culture can play for some international students trying to adapt at life at Kent State.
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"In nursing, the United States has the best nursing education system, the best nursing care system in the world," Lai says. "But if I consider my career development, I will get better development in Taiwan.”

Lai has had the opportunity during his stay in the United States to associate with America with friends, such as New York, Chi­cago and Washington, D.C. He says he enjoys the peaceful environment and the academic beauty of Kent State but can understand why some students may become irritable or unsettled in such an environment.

"Ohio is good for studying, but it’s boring," Lai says. "But that’s OK because I came here to study.”

Natalie Barrett — Finding a home team

Growing up in Glasgow, Scotland, Natalie Barrett spent a good portion of her life playing field hockey and dressing of playing at the collegiate level; however, as in much of Europe, sports are secondary to academics, and Barrett feared once she left high school, she would no longer be able to play at the level she enjoyed.

When a fellow hockey player and older classmate secured a spot at Kent State and joined its field hockey team, Barrett began to contemplate making the move herself. She was 10 years old. Years later in 2003, Barrett was ac­cepted by Kent State and its field hockey team.

"The first couple weeks, I was calling home and adjusting. I was worried, but I fit in right away,” she says.

The sophomore marketing major credits her swift adjustment to her teammates, many of whom are international students as well. The American teammates do everything they can to make the international girls feel welcome, Barrett says, often inviting them home for holidays such as Thanksgiving.

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"There are a lot of American traditions in Brit­ain, but everything here is so much bigger and vast,” Barrett says.

From across the world to American culture

Hello Kitty

Japan

First registered in 1976, Hello Kitty didn’t become popular in the United States until the late 1990s. The earliest Hello Kitty cartoon series in Japan began in 1974 and the American version of the cartoon started in 1991. It wasn’t until celebrities, such as Mary Kay, started displaying the trademark that it became popular in America.

Hookah

India and Turkey

The hookah originated in India, but the modern version we are familiar with came from Turkey. Tobacco was used in the water pan in the 1600s and eventually brought to America during the experimentation period of the 1950s. Now hookah bars can be found in nearly every college town.

Ravik’s Cube

Hungary

In 1974, a Hungarian inventor developed the Magic Cube and released it to Budapest toy shops. It was released worldwide in 1980 as the Rubik’s Cube. Since then, different versions have been invented to test users skills.

Hula Hoop

Egyp and Australia

"Hula Hooping" originated in ancient Egypt. It was adopted by countries throughout the world. In the 1950s, an American toy company named Wham-O invented "hula hooping" after being introduced to twirling hoops in Australia. Because of the imitation of the popular Hawaiian dance, hula hoops were born.

Vending Machines

Egypt

In the first century, a Greek engineer invented a machine that dispensed Holy Water after a coin was distributed. The first in the United States were born in 1886 to sell gum. Since then, nearly anything can be found in various machines, including candy, beverages, condoms and magazines.

— Karly Pickel

Both places have advantages for living — it just depends where you want to be.

Natalie Barrett, a sophomore marketing major, trains with the women’s field hockey team in the off-season. The team has helped Barrett adjust easily, feel welcome and make friends.

"The first couple weeks, I was calling home and adjusting. I was worried, but I fit in right away.

The decline of international student enrollment

The number of international student enrollment in universities has always been a competitive one. After Sept. 11, and the discovery that many of the terrorists linked to the plane hijackings had entered the United States on student visas, restrictions and laws regarding issuing of student visas became tougher than ever.

A 2005 survey conducted by the Institute of International Education, in conjunction with various other national and international educational institutions, reported that international student enrollment at U.S. institutions suffered a 10-year decline in recent years, particularly at the undergraduate level.

The institute, an independent nonprofit organization based in New York City, noted in its 2006 annual report that enrollment was beginning to stabilize across the country, mainly credit to a more effective visa-issuance process for the legalization.

Although Kent State saw an initial bump in the trend as an American student enrollment figures post Sept. 11, the international student enrollment is now decreasing.

Ken Cusner, executive director for International Affairs at Kent State, says figures have gone from about 940 in 2004-2005 to 841 current international enrollees at the university.

"We kept increasing the number to a nice, nurturing environment," Cusner says. "I think it is primarily because of immigration costs," says Deb Lyons, interim director of International Student and Scholar Services, of the decreasing enrollment. "The cost of education in the United States is not getting any cheaper."

"Both places have advantages for living — it just depends where you want to be," he adds.
Antoine Beauchemin — A search for diversity

Antoine Beauchemin has more experience than most adapting to life as an international student. Since age 12, he has lived in several different countries — from his home in Montreal, Canada to Warsaw, Poland. His family’s most recent move to Hudson because of his father’s company transfer led Beauchemin to apply to Kent State.

Beauchemin has been at Kent State since fall 2006, studying for his master’s degree in community counseling through the College of Education, Health and Human Services.

"From an educational point of view it’s been really good," Beauchemin says of his decision to attend Kent State. "Counseling exists almost exclusively in the United States, and it’s a profession I think suits me well — Kent State’s really good at it.

One thing that does bother Beauchemin is the lack of other international students in his program — people he could relate to about being an ‘outsider.’ Beauchemin has many international friends in Ohio that he has met through his involvement with the International Students and Scholar Services office and its programs but has yet to meet another Canadian student.

"Every university says they’re pretty diverse,” Beauchemin says. "But here, people are from a 20-mile radius of Kent in my program — diversity, here, I feel is minimal.”

Beauchemin says diversity at McGill University in Montreal — where he received an international baccalaureate in psychology — was everywhere, culturally and politically. He says he misses those interactions in his program at Kent State.

"It’s fairly big adjustment but not anything too shocking,” Beauchemin says. "It’s been positive, challenging but positive.”

Beauchemin has not decided whether he will remain in the United States and practice counseling when he has completed his studies, or return to Montreal.

"I’m spending a lot of time now thinking about when this is over, what am I going to do, but I’m looking forward to it,” he says.

Shared international perspectives

Barrett, Zhu, Lai and Beauchemin all had the opportunity to meet one another and discuss their experiences at Kent State’s cold Tuesday evening in the Student Center. While each student had a different perspective on what life is like as a Kent State student, they all shared a common belief stemming from their interaction with many Americans during their stay in the United States. For its own survival, America needs to become more diverse and globally aware.

"I am lucky that in Taiwanese culture we are exposed to many different things,” Lai says. "American students draw their culture from the past, but you need to understand that past doesn’t count now. You have to learn about other cultures and other countries to stay strong.”

Barrett agreed with Lai, adding that although some people she has met have a basic understanding of other countries, many others show no interest in global learning whatsoever.

"On the whole, it’s something that could be improved,” Barrett says of the lack of exposure to international cultures in American schools. "It’s a shame. Sometimes I wonder how they can be so sheltered.”

Beauchemin was shocked when some of the people he spoke to didn’t know where Montreal was, adding many people were surprised English wasn’t his first language.

"My brother’s girlfriend doesn’t understand why we speak French at home,” Beauchemin says. "It’s like people think, ‘Why would anybody speak anything other than English?’”

Zhu says he feels China and the United States have more in common than some Americans may realize. While he would like for people to learn more about China on their own, he says he will not force them to learn about his culture if they don’t want to.

These reasons, among many others, are why Kent State needs international students, says Ken Cushner, executive director of International Affairs — to provide multiple perspectives and experiences.

"They bring opportunities of first-hand interaction for other students,” Cushner says. If

Shelley Blundell is a history graduate and a writer-magazine journalist major. This is her first story for The Burr. Contact her at ohblundel@kent.edu.

How does Kent State stack up?

Chinese students such as Zhu comprise the second-highest number of international students enrolling in U.S. institutions, according to the Institute for International Education. (India has the highest enrollment numbers.) These enrollment figures hold true at Kent State as well — Indian and Chinese students comprise more than 300 out of the 841 current international students, according to Kent State’s current international enrollment figures.

Deb Lyons, interim director of International Student and Scholar Services, says there are many facets to Kent State that make it a comfortable and comforting place for any international student.

"We try to connect them with a student from their own country,” Lyons says of what ISSS does when international students first arrive. "In a son of an, I went through this too, and here’s how I survived connection.”

Lyons says ISSS also makes sure basic needs are being met because adapting to Ohio life can bring up issues students may not have thought about, such as whether a student is coming in winter and needs a warm coat when he or she arrives.

In addition to ISSS, Lyons says there are several very strong student organizations on campus, particularly for international students from China, India and Taiwan. ISSS also advertises for holiday hosts within the Kent State community at various times during the year so international students can experience American holiday traditions such as Thanksgiving.

If students need help with other issues, such as transfer of visa status, Lyons says if ISSS cannot help, it’ll do its best to point the student in the right direction.

"We give 110 percent,” Lyons says.

Antoine Beauchemin, a master’s student in community counseling, plays hockey every Sunday in a recreational league at the Kent State University Ice arena.

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One thing that does bother Beauchemin is the lack of other international students in his program — people he could relate to about being an “outsider.” Beauchemin has many international friends in Ohio that he has met through his family and through his involvement with the International Students and Scholar Services offices and its programs but has yet to meet another Canadian student.

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Shelley Blundell is a history graduate and a senior magazine journalism major.

This is her first story for The Burr. Contact her at sblundel@kent.edu.
homies & hook-ups

(Fun) sex education

The average amount of male ejaculate is about 1 tablespoon, or 10cc. This is how the bands 10cc and Lovin' Spoonful got their names.

Fifty percent of all pregnancies are unplanned.

When a person is developing a loving relationship, surging levels of brain chemicals cause a "high" similar to that caused by amphetamines, resulting in giddiness, euphoria and elation. This high doesn't last because the body develops a tolerance for the chemicals, and the intensity of the relationship typically decreases.

Sex by the numbers

In a study of 18 to 24 year olds:

32 percent report having only one sexual partner
34 percent report having had 2 to 4 sexual partners
15 percent report having had 5 to 10 partners
8 percent report having had 10 to 20 partners
3 percent report having had more than 21 partners

60 percent of men think if two people really like each other, it's acceptable to have intercourse even after knowing each other for a short amount of time
35 percent of women


On average, the age at which people lose their virginity has increased by about six months since the 1970s. Males typically report curiosity as the reason for their first intercourse. Females typically report affection for their partner as the primary reason.

It is a tradition in Thailand to perform free vasectomies on the king's birthday.

A woman's clitoris contains more nerve fibers than a man's penis, making the clitoris more sensitive.

Before the late 1960s, many campuses upheld a "one foot on the floor" rule: A woman could have a man in her dorm room only with the door open while each person had one foot on the floor.

NATIONAL AWARDS – 2006
Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Best Single Issue of an Ongoing Print Magazine: General Excellence
"Selection of stories and presentation, both layout and photography, and the first-rate reporting and excellent writing gave readers of the Burr a magazine to dig into."
Judge: John Walsh, executive editor of ESPN magazine

Best Single Issue of an Ongoing Print Magazine: Design
Third place: The Burr, Kent State University, Katie Phillips, editor, Logan Sommers, art director, spring 2006 issue.
Judge: Bob Gray, design editor of National Geographic

Best Single Issue of an Ongoing Print Magazine: Editorial
Judges: Editors of Outside magazine
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