Stay classy, Kent State
Your guide to
adult entertaining

Dazed and confused: The struggle to find answers today

SHE’S BACK
The pinup sashays into pop culture

UNPLUG IT!
And other easy ways to go green

Should guns be on campus? The debate heats up
Tag, Tony, Tag
Some see it as art.
Some see it as illegal.
Some see it as life.

On the road again
Mix CD + vehicle + good company = the perfect day trip. Cheese doesn't hurt, either.

Rants and ratings
The tables are turned as students give the professors the grades on RateMyProfessors.com.

Punk rock grows up
Ramones-core rockers trade in their gear for the daily grind, wives and kids.

The new sperm
What will we donate next for some quick cash? One Burr writer profiles her and fellow students' experiences donating plasma in Akron.
I’ve had a lot of people ask me what the theme of this issue was going to be. Two days ago, and two months into production, I don’t think I could have told you. I did know that there’s one thing that unites every single Burr reader — they are students at Kent State University. You try coming up with a theme for 57 pages of content when that is the only connecting factor!

But as final drafts of stories are rolling in, it is becoming apparent that people want to talk about what is happening right now — style trends of today; how we’re affecting an election that’s going to change our country completely; the battle lines drawn from a campus culture of fear after shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University.

That’s why the pinup girl is our cover. At first, that logic sounds twisted, but hear me out.

It’s fascinating to me, and apparently the rest of our staff, how time can turn the definition of an idea or image on its head.

The pinup girl began as a motivation for America’s armed forces, appearing on postcards or calendars. She’s come to represent femininity in a whole new way. The look inspired by Bettie Page and Betty Grable is now being embraced by all social groups, not just men in uniform.

The same underlying philosophy can be applied to our other stories. What ever happened to the punk rockers of the 1980s? When did “green” go from being a color to a lifestyle? How did the cool weekend activity in college go from raving to throwing a dinner party?

The Burr is, in essence, like a postcard. A letter to students that explores matters they care about — stories trapped in time that tell them how things at home are changing for better or worse.

Ink, paper, a story, a pretty lady.

Some things will never change.

Enjoy,

Special thanks to our patrons:

Tonya Vinas
Katie Phillips
Margaret Garmon
Melody C. Reilly
Katie Hilbert
Jaclyn Youhana
Carl and Ann Schierhorn

Cover model: Gina Fabian.

Cover and inside cover photography by Heidi Weber.

Back cover art courtesy of Amazon.com and istockphoto.com.
EXCELLENCE in Action
Healthy bodies - Healthy minds

University Health Services
DeWeese Health Center
Eastway Drive
Kent, Ohio 44242
(330) 672-2322
26 COVER STORY Fashionable return of '08
Keeping your clothes on never sounded so sexy. With the return of the pinup girl, however, that's exactly what it is — subdued seduction.

10 LIFE & LEISURE Sophisticated host Get out the martini glasses, light some candles and prepare a delicious meal with these dinner party tips.

28 FEATURE To carry or not to carry The Northern Illinois University and Virginia Tech shootings are making concealed carry a loaded issue.

32 FOOD Pour me another glass of vino Impress your friends and family the next time you sit down for a meal and have a glass of wine.

34 STYLE Eco-fashion You don’t have to live in the middle of the forest to embrace these “green” getups.

46 FEATURE Steering without the manual A beer, a girl, a decision — what's a guy to do?

DEPARTMENTS

09 TRENDS Sofa networking CouchSurfing.com. Sign up, make friends, crash on couches nearly anywhere in the world — free of charge.

18 FYI / WHO A different side The Burr pitted President Lester Lefton’s daughter and co-worker against each other to see who knows more about our show-tune-loving, laundry-tip-giving leader.

19 FYI / WHAT Someone’s talking about you National studies give the scoop about what's going on with us, from the 237 reasons we have sex to how much debt we’re racking up.

19 FYI / WHERE Batter up Do you have what it takes to be a baseball manager?

20 FYI / WHEN Spring cleaning You’ve grown quite attached to that toothbrush you’ve had since the summer of '97, but it’s time to call it quits.

22 Little-known dangers of vitamins A look at vitamin overdosing and the irreversible effects you should know about.

23 FYI / WHY The heart of it all Who’s going to be our next president? Ask Ohio. Buckeye voters play a key role in the selection.

23 FYI / HOW A sobering study Do the numbers behind Kent State’s “Thinking About Your Drinking?” campaign add up? One Burr writer does some number crunching of her own to find out.

24 ARTS Fuzzy tags Knitting has risen to a whole new level at Kent State and redefined the boundaries of art and graffiti.

50 COMMENTARY Going the distance Living at home with Mom and Dad may look like a life of luxury, but the cons of being a commuter student go deeper than gas-guzzling and an earlier-set alarm clock.

56 LAST SHOT Rallying for Emily Lifting spirits one buzz cut at a time.
Try some of these classic road trip games as you travel toward your destination: Tell stories about the people in the car next to yours; play “Name That Tune” with old theme songs from TGIF or Nickelodeon; before you leave, agree to do something whenever you see a specific item (for example, every time you see a street sign with a funny name such as Tater Peeler Road, everyone gets out for a picture); bring the question cards from your favorite trivia game and test your travel companions.

She was a day tripper

How to find hope, humor and cheese on the road

Reporting by Sarah Steiner // Photography by Elizabeth Biris

I'm almost positive the two gentlemen in the car to the right of us are sophomores in college. I don’t have any real proof of this. No solid proof, at least. I'm just usually good at determining how old people are. Right probably 61 percent of the time. That’s above average.

What I'm not usually good at guessing is why the one with his hood up (we'll name him “Gary” for clarity's sake) is playing the air guitar so ferociously. Three years ago I could have easily said that Gary was merely very involved with whatever is playing on the car’s stereo. Three years ago no one had Guitar Hero.

Gary is playing with little-to-no rhythm as he goes. I can tell this because he is rocking back and forth with no concern for finding a beat to stick with. I just see a few fingers flying. Flying like a secretary’s fingers on a typewriter, that is.

I notice his buddy is dancing as well, with better rhythm. From what I am witnessing I am able to strike the following theory:

Guitar Hero has ruined the once-great practice of air guitar.

A song featured on Guitar Hero must have come on the radio. Gary’s friend is interested in the song for the song’s sake. Gary has recognized the melody and insists on “going through the motions” by recreating the song’s intricate fingering pattern he uses during the game. Actually, on a larger scale, Guitar Hero is also ruining music in general — or at least every song featured in the game. GH will have the same effect as commercials sometimes have. For the same reason I think about pickup trucks when I hear “Born to be Wild,” many people will probably think about their game console when they hear “Free Bird.”

My thoughts run rampant when I take road trips. Luckily, Leah understands. She is the driver today, but more importantly the person whom I will be bouncing ideas off. Someone like Leah makes for the perfect companion on a trip. We became good friends when we met last year, but this year she lives in Chicago. She’s visiting for the weekend, which means there will be a lot of discussion, a lot of overindulging in each other’s reactions. It also helps to have a road trip partner who is one of those people willing to do pointless things. Today we are on our way to a cheese barn.

But back to my current train of thought. Now I’m
not so much concerned with Gary’s reaction to his stereo anymore as I am with the stereo in our car. “Throw It All Away” by Zero 7 just came on the mix CD I made specifically for the trip (more on this later). I need Leah’s opinion on the song because for the past two weeks I’ve been enduring the worst love-hate relationship with it.

When I told Leah the name of the band, she immediately asked, “Didn’t they have a song on the Garden State soundtrack?”

Yes.

Which is part of the reason I don’t know if I can really like the band very much. Not to say I automatically dislike anyone who appears on that album. For example, I’m an avid Simon & Garfunkel supporter. It’s just that the album became the average person’s “indie CD.” I have no idea why or how, but that’s what it became. I know this because I’ve heard more than 14 people say, “I don’t know … I don’t really like indie that much, but I do have the soundtrack to Garden State.” Also, I know at least six people whose mothers own a (sometimes burned) copy. This is because all indie music circa 2003 sounds like something Paul McCartney would have written if he were 24 in 2003. Everyone’s mom either still loves Paul or otherwise is willing to settle for him if they really would have preferred John or George. Indie songs off this album in particular are little more than reasonably well-written (i.e. “catchy” but not necessarily bubblegum “poppy”) love songs. This is Paul’s specialty (think “Silly Love Songs”).

As the Zero 7 song played quietly in the background, I explained my dilemma. This is an important detail. Always play the song quietly in the background while you narrate over it, then again at regular volume afterward with little or no interruptions. This is very “Classic Albums” narration from VH1 Classic, which conveniently makes your audience subconsciously believe you more. You sound like a total musical intellect. Convenient.

My issue is simple. I am a huge fan of basically every aspect of the song except the refrain. I don’t know what happens. The instrumental aspect — not bad at all. The vocals — pretty beautiful. The lyrics — not awful. But the refrain happens and it sounds like absolute shit to me. Gets too light and airy for the rest of the song. Becomes Mandy Moore when it’s been pulling off a respectable sound otherwise. As if with this refrain the band now has a shot to not only have been on the Garden State soundtrack, but now maybe even the “Grey’s Anatomy” soundtrack.

I found no resolution. Leah didn’t really know what to tell me about my hot-cold relationship with the song. Only that it made her want to snap her fingers, which I don’t think she ever actually did.

What the song did make me realize is the significance of having a mix tape made for a road trip. This is one of the single most crucial elements of the road trip that makes it different from any other trip that has a simple “from point A to point B” quality. A trip with a desired physical destination has a map to take you to this place. A mix CD is the psychological map. It is the closest you can come to determining where you’ll go in your thoughts. For the most part, that is.

For example, Bob Dylan came on after Zero 7. This automatically launched us into a discussion on how he is one of the very few artists we can listen to regardless of place, time or mood. This instantly led to determining other artists who work in this manner. This then led to immediate deadlocks from both sides for the other party to download a certain song “as soon as we get back.”

Not to mention making a mix tape is a very communal project. Usually, everyone in the car has a specific song or group of songs they wish to share for the sole purpose of taking everyone’s thoughts somewhere, whether it’s discussed or not. Finding a physical destination is always something that must involve mutual consent. Everyone can choose an emotional place to visit at some point during the trip when music is the vehicle.

The only thing I will warn is that just like going somewhere, and maybe wishing you’d remembered to pack something or wish you’d stopped at the last rest stop, you’ll forget songs. I say this only because the second I finished burning the CD I was almost in a blind rage that I forgot to add this fantastic cover of Bob Dylan’s “This Wheel’s on Fire” performed by Julie Driscoll, Brian Auger and the Trinity.

On the subject of leaving things out, we were thrilled upon discovery of this cookie we bought earlier to split. It was organic and vegan and whatever else makes you feel the least guilty you ever have in your life about eating. With this cookie, they apparently leave the egg out and I think the sugar or something. I don’t know — it was good enough (oatmeal-raisin, by the way). But it was certainly not something I’d be too thrilled about if my mother made me a batch. Cookie recipes shouldn’t be toyed with too much. Organic will never replace regular baked goods, just as tofu will never replace turkey in terms of meat. Make me something with tofu that tastes half as good as barbecue pulled pork and so-help-me-God I will become a full-on, no-exceptions vegan.
Or maybe just full-on, no-exceptions vegetarian. I think if I did become a vegetarian I’d have to get a car like Leah’s (she’s not a vegetarian, though). It’s a Prius hybrid and quite possibly one of the coolest cars I’ve ever been in. It feels like a little spaceship floating around on the highway. Almost seems like a fake car. You push a button to make it start, and it sounds like it turns off entirely when you stop at a light. Very Jetsons, very chic. The only thing that makes me nervous is the fact that it has one of those GPS systems. Not because messing with it while you’re driving might cause an accident, but mainly because when you don’t go the way it wants you to, it drives you legally insane. No pun intended.

* * *

We arrive at the cheese barn. This is not your average cheese barn, though. This is Grandpa’s Cheese barn. The first person we encountered threw us off entirely for what we were about to experience inside. Leah and I were taking pictures of each other in front of a sign for the Barn. A man, finding this quite unreasonably entertaining, rolled down his window, yelled “Tourists!” and chuckled.

I didn’t totally get it, I’ll admit. This cheese haven is on a random exit off I-71 South. You yell “Tourist!” at people snapping pictures at regular, non-touristy spots — like the post office — for it to be humorous.

On the inside of Grandpa’s Cheese barn I noticed there were far more crappy knickknacks than I expected. Think of every bad souvenir you’ve ever gotten. Now write your name on it — that’s the kind of stuff you can buy here. I honestly thought I’d be walking into some sort of cheese haven where everything from cake to chairs is made of cheese. That was upstairs. And it was just basically a lot of cheese, as well as many (probably pretty deliciously average) homemade preserves, soups and sauces. Quaint one way or another.

The girls working behind the counter were college-age and noticeably annoyed by most everything. I know this because the second I started looking at some mozzarella, one came up and asked, “What can I get you?” in the most irritated voice. Whether she was irritated because she worked at the Cheese barn off the highway, wasn’t getting a raise from Grandpa, or because she was trying to close is still up for debate. Either way, please don’t rush me when I’m trying to make a decision on a pound of $5.99 cheese.

I decided on a half pound of “salsa cheese.” (They have these “Thanks for not asking us to cut less than a ½ lb!” signs everywhere. As much of a joke as the “Thanks for not smoking!” signs.

The Transportation

One of the most important aspects of a road trip — the vehicle — has changed over the years. Some have been featured in movies, books and songs, but all represent the American spirit of the time.

1950s

Hitchhiking
Who cares what the car looks like? Hitchhiking was a popular way to get around the country. The main characters in Jack Kerouac’s On the Road employ this tactic a few times.

The Volkswagen Bus
Particularly perfect if you like to stop once in a while to hop in the back and ... rest?

1960s

Choppers
Currently making a comeback, this motorcycle took Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda from Mexico to New Orleans.

The Greyhound Bus
In Simon & Garfunkel’s 1968 road trip song “America,” they describe the views of the country from the bus windows.
Going on a road trip has very little to do with making it to a destination. It's far more important that you took the time to free your thoughts.

The tension boiled over in the shop when I reached the counter (this was the only place, by the way, that I've ever seen a replica of those Staples "Easy Buttons"). While I panicked that they might not be able to take debit cards with their ancient register (they do), I overheard a worker tell her boss (Grandpa?!) that "Cynthia's stole your music box." I assume she meant CD player or radio. The boss immediately whirled around and started asking questions about his "music box."

Too awkward.

Horribly enough, they had locked the doors, so while we were trying to leave the Barn, the boss had to come unlock it. He was cheerful but still noticeably unsettled.

The entire ordeal ended the way a good sitcom that lasts two episodes does: with a bad punch line that is meant to break the tension in the air. A man who was leaving/escaping with us said (far too confident of his one-liner):

"Good thing we're not locked in — we'd have nothing to eat!"

On the way back home I noticed a school bus and made an unofficial vow to myself while I listened to Regina Spektor. If I ever get even a small fan-base of readers as a journalist, I will write at least one column advocating seatbelts on school buses. Children, by nature, are very stupid. A school bus, to them, is a playground on wheels. I know this because I was a stupid child on a school bus before I progressed to a stupid young woman in a car. Not only is there this expected childhood stupidity, but also the fact that we expect one person to drive a massive hunk of metal on the highway, and suburban side streets, as well as busy city streets.

On top of this, they must baby-sit however many kids fit on a bus as they sit behind the bus driver. This is ridiculous. Do not forget that the bus driver tends to be a 40+ tired woman.

But maybe I shouldn’t bother. Like hell I’d wear a seatbelt on the bus in fourth grade. Plus, sometimes Regina Spektor makes you take yourself far too seriously.

It was getting dark, and I felt like I was at that point where you feel like Meg Ryan looks in most of her movies. Calm, breezy (this might be mainly because of the blue eyes and blond hair thing), curious and about to fall in love with Tom Hanks. Minus the Tom Hanks part.

Nighttime driving does something to a person. It makes for an almost excruciatingly self-reflective time. Without the sun there is almost nothing to look at to distract, so all that’s left is you.

I stop taking notes here. Leah was playing her songs now, and I wanted to give them my attention. I did what I could to keep my thoughts focused enough throughout the trip in order to write about them. But a road trip offers you so much in terms of ideas.

A road trip gives enough stimulation to keep your thoughts constantly moving. Yet there aren’t any true distractions once a thought begins. It is free to roam and grow when, in any other environment, it would have been stifled nearly immediately.

Going on a road trip has very little to do with making it to a destination. It’s far more important that you took this time to free your thoughts. No one takes the time to stop work or play long enough to merely doodle upon their own ideas. There is always something that needs to be done at home or in the office. The second you get into a car and “hit the road,” you cannot do laundry. You can’t check your e-mail. You aren’t left with anything but your own thoughts and the shared thoughts of whom you’re with. You leave the trip with this newfound understanding of something — yourself, your car mate, Genesis, the Cheesebarn, whatever.

Road trips allow you to step in your own thoughts, ignoring that which you never expected, be it funny, insightful or presumptuous. It doesn’t matter what it leads to. The important part is that what was learned came from the purest form of knowledge...personal conclusions.

B. Sarah Steiner is a sophomore magazine journalism major. This is her third story for The Burr.
Where The Competition Has Come To Eat... For Over 24 Years!!

Franklin Square Deli

VOTED BEST IN KENT!
Downtown, corner of Water & Main

Corned Beef, Salads, Submarines, Bagels, Gyros, Proscuitto, Soups, 36 Sandwiches, Roast Beef, Pizza, Daily Specials, Chilli, Cheesecake, Box Lunches, Capacillo, Arabica Coffee, Party Trays, Great Staff!

Indian Valley Apartments

Leasing office open
M-T-Th-F 8:00am - 6:00pm
Wed 8:00am - 4:30pm
Sat 9:00am - 1:00pm

1 bdrm. $460
2 bdrm. $525
3 bdrm. $610
$375 Security Deposit

• Pets Welcome!
• Spacious Suites
• Blinds included
• 24 hour emergency Maintenance
• 3 playgrounds
• On-Site Laundry
• Basketball court
• Softball field
• Great Location
• Minutes From KSU
• 2.5 miles west of Dix Stadium on Route 261

For more information on the department, visit our website: http://dept.kent.edu/cjst/

The Psychological Clinic

Offering a full array of psychological services for individuals, couples, children and families.

Services are free for Kent State University students.

176 Kent Hall

330.672.2372

Undergraduate Studies:
Opportunities to Enrich Your Kent State Experience!

Need a Job? Do you have skills to help others?
- Upward Bound Tutor or Mentor
- Academic Success Center Tutor
Call Today! 330.672.9292

Are you struggling in a class? Get a Tutor.
Join the Kent State Freshman Advisory Council.
Join your Kent State Student Centennial Celebration committee.
Serve Others by joining the Kent State Bloxi project.
Is your Academic Advisor excellent? Advisor Nominations
Go to: http://explore.kent.edu

GET Out of Kent Now! Kent State National Student Exchange
Go to: http://explore.kent.edu/nse

The Department of Justice Studies offers a four-year program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. The Justice Studies curriculum integrates knowledge and skills acquired in disciplines such as sociology, psychology and political science with a range of justice subjects including crime and delinquency, law enforcement, courts, corrections and law.

The program provides an opportunity to understand the foundations and problems of the contemporary criminal and juvenile justice processes and suggests approaches to the solution of these problems. The program prepares its graduates for professional roles in the varied fields of criminal and juvenile justice and for graduate study or law school.

For more information on the department, visit our website: http://dept.kent.edu/cjst/
mi sofá es su sofá

Couch surfing: A travel alternative that’s taking over the globe

Reporting by Emily Totten // Photography by Heidi Weber & Elizabeth Myers

If you were planning a trip to Europe, or any other continent, by the time you added in airfare, a place to stay, food, souvenirs and maybe even a rental vehicle, you’re looking at a couple thousand dollars. Now imagine being able to eliminate a large portion of that amount. Sounds great, right? Well, if you’re comfortable sleeping on strangers’ couches in a foreign place, these next two words could be your ticket out of here.

Couch surfing. Travelers go to strangers’ homes and crash on their couches for as long as the hosts are comfortable with letting them stay. You can find couches to sleep on from just about any place in the world.

Oh, and it’s completely free of charge.

CouchSurfing.com is sort of like your “cultural connection.” It aims to “internationally network people and places, create educational exchanges, raise collective consciousness, spread tolerance and facilitate cultural understanding,” according to its mission statement. The nonprofit organization’s site represents 225 countries and 420,308 members, so there’s something for everyone.

The Web site offers not only a cheap way to travel, but it’s an easy way to make international contacts. When registering, users don’t necessarily have to say they want to travel or host. There’s a third option where users can choose to meet their contacts, maybe spend a little time with them on their home turf, but then go their separate ways. This is a better option for those who don’t feel comfortable sleeping in a random somebody’s house or letting a random somebody sleep in theirs.

Junior finance major Ilya Poklad was leaving for a trip to Sweden and Latvia with his dad, and then to Denmark by himself for a few days. While looking at travel sites on Yahoo a week before he was to be in Denmark, Poklad came across an article on couch surfing. Immediately, he made a profile on CouchSurfing.com and sent out several messages to people in the country. He made affirmative plans with a girl named Giedre in Copenhagen a couple days before he was to arrive in Denmark.

“My parents gave me money for a hotel, but (couch surfing) was free … so I kept their money,” Poklad says.

“It was perfect, though,” says Poklad of his English-speaking Danish host. “The first day I was there we just walked around, and she showed me all the local spots.”

Poklad went on to say how trusting Giedre was of him. “She would leave to go to work while I was still sleeping, and she just told me to lock the door behind me whenever I left to go do some sightseeing.”

Although Poklad’s couch is up for grabs on the Web site, he hasn’t hosted anyone yet.

Of course, there is a large risk in either going into a stranger’s home or letting a stranger into yours. However, there’s good news for someone who wants to travel or host — or both — that will lower those risks. According to the site, Couch Surfing has several precautionary measures, including making sure addresses and names are legit and rating members by levels of trust (a level three verified member has been approved several times as being safe). The most important, however, is the tried and true system of being vouched for — members vouch for other members, creating a “circle of trust” that each couch is soft and safe.

B. Emily Totten is a freshman magazine journalism major. This is her first story for The Burr.
How to throw a dinner party with a college-student schedule and budget

Reporting by Douglas Hite  // Photography by Heidi Weber

As far as social functions, the dinner party is a rare breed in the life of a typical college student. An implication might even be made that a dinner party is not a party at all as it tends not to have the distinctive characteristics of other college soirées: cheap beer, blazing music and students going wild. The motivation for this type of engagement is different, too. The idea isn’t to be rambunctious or to drink until you black out, but, instead, to coherently socialize with good friends while enjoying delicious food. A dinner party is a critical step in moving toward adulthood — to have a gathering you have independently thrown that shows your skills in the kitchen and gives the impression, or illusion, that you’re fairly classy. To aid in your pursuit of classiness, here’s a breakdown of the dinner party process in five steps:

1) Initial planning
(three to four weeks before event)

In order to choose the best date, you must first review your personal schedule and the schedules of others. Make sure that your friends aren’t going to be out of town or aren’t planning to attend some other function on the night of your event.

2) Create a theme
(three to four weeks before event)

A theme can be demonstrated through the types of food prepared, style of dress or entertainment. They can be as diverse as Thai food, ugly sweaters or circus folk (carries) doing the Macarena. Themes tend to center around holidays.

3) Prepare and send invitations
(two to three weeks before event)

With the evolution of the Internet, it is no longer informal to send an invitation via e-mail. As host(ess), you might try writing and decorating a physical invitation, but if you would prefer e-mailing, send one as a PDF or JPEG instead of a boring e-mail that could get overlooked. Facebook invitations, while easy and acceptable, may be too informal because word can quickly spread that you are having a “party.” If you aren’t careful, you may end up having fondue with a dude named BabyFace.

4) Purchase supplies
(two to three days before event)

There’s no need to go past your means when buying food or decorations. A few pieces of décor, likely reminiscent of the theme, are a good idea that will suffice. Keep in mind the number of guests you’ve invited and prepare just enough food for everyone. You don’t want to be eating eggplant lasagna for the next three weeks.

5) Final preparation
(day of event)

Give yourself plenty of time. Make sure decorations are in place several hours before the party (this gives you ample time to focus on the food). Stagger dinner preparations from the longest time needed to cook a dish to the shortest. Being able to sit down and enjoy the entire meal all at once with your guests is the goal, obviously. Now, it’s time to relax with good food and great friends for the duration of the evening.

From food to finery, you don’t

AS EASY AS SHORTCAKE

You’ll need strawberries, whipped cream, shortcake shells (Acme, Giant Eagle, Save-A-Lot). Let the washed and cut strawberries sit in one tablespoon of sugar; top the shortcake shells with the berries and a dollop of whipped cream.
have to break the bank or your back — try these tips to perk up your party:

HAVE A WICKEDLY GOOD TIME
A little wax and flame is always a good decision for creating a relaxed atmosphere. Be sure to keep the scented candles away from the dinner table. Clashing aromas may distract guests.

APPETIZERS FOR THE MASSES
Try these cheap and easy foods to feed many:
- Hummus and pita chips
- Caprese: slice up mozzarella cheese and tomatoes
- Mandarin orange salad: Mix two types of lettuce, one can of drained mandarin oranges, chopped onion, slivered almonds and croutons

SIP WITH SWAGGER
Check out Dollar Tree and Dollar General. Both have kitschy, fancy glasses for ... you guessed it, a dollar each. Try to get enough for all your guests or have a selection for them to choose from.
The red pen changes hands when students log on to rant or rave about those who graded their tests and doled out homework for 15 weeks.

Reporting by Tim Magaw
Illustration by Leslie Arnz

After Kim Ugran received her class schedule right before the start of her freshman year, she took her older sister’s advice and logged onto RateMyProfessors.com and looked up the ratings of each of her instructors.

Before she even came to campus, Ugran was checking her instructors’ ratings on the site. A few times she’d check her schedule, and the instructor had been switched.

“I’d be like, ‘That’s not who I had! I liked my teacher before, even though I’ve never met her,’” says Ugran, a freshman fashion design major. “And I’d check again, and it’d be a not-so-good teacher, and I’d be all bummed.”

Scheduling classes has become a much more complicated process than it had traditionally been now that Ugran has added Rate My Professors to the equation.

She isn’t just trying to find the class that perfectly fits her daily routine and allows her to sleep in.

She isn’t trying to find the class that will work for whatever concentration she pursues, as she’s still not sure about her major.

She’s trying to find the professor with the best possible ratings, which she says is anything “above a three” on a five-point scale in each of the site’s five categories: clarity, ease, helpfulness, overall quality and hotness — which is indicated by a single red chili pepper.

Melissa Capretta, a sophomore human development and family studies major, has used the Web site every semester of her college career and isn’t sure what she would do without it.

“If you have a teacher you can’t understand, or if other people had problems with them, you probably will, too,” she says. “So it’s nice to see what other people have to say.”

When it’s time to register for the next semester’s course load, students make their way to the university’s online schedule of classes. But often, such as in Ugran’s and Capretta’s cases, FlashFAST isn’t the only Web site loading on students’ computers. RateMyProfessors.com lurks in the background, displaying comments from disgruntled and satisfied students who wish to offer a few last words — often rife with grammatical errors and a few censored obscenities — about the man or woman who marked up their papers, scored their bubble sheets and bored or captivated them with lectures.
"WORST PROFESSOR EVER. Is also prejudiced. Constantly swallowed her saliva ... Uneasy to reach and cannot use the latest technology and blamed US for it. The online quizzes were okay. She went way to fast with the notes. You are better off reading the chapters beforehand ..." grieves one bitter student who offered one professor scores of one in the areas of helpfulness and clarity.

"Great prof. Cares about his students and goes out of his way to help. Very knowledgeable in his field and it shows. Recommend 100%," suggests one satisfied student.

"She talks about her cats a lot, but if you look past that she's awesome! She incorporates singing into her lectures, and I always like that because it makes me get into the lectures. Very easy tests and easier book reports. Just do the work and listen and you'll have a good time," reports one student who rated the professor fives across the board.

"Mean, Grumpy, Evil in every way," snaps one angry site user.

"She is awesome!!! You can really tell she is passionate about her teaching. She'll do whatever you can to help you. Take her class if you can!" says one excited student who offered an almost perfect rating.

RateMyProfessors.com offers more than 6.8 million comments for more than a million professors from schools ranging from Howard to Harvard and Kansas to Kent State. A representative from the Web site could not be reached for comment, but its mission is bluntly stated on the frequently asked questions portion of the site.

"We are just common, ordinary people who believe that students are the CUSTOMERS of professors — and we believe they absolutely have a right to voice their opinions."

'It says more about the person doing the rating'

Criticism of Rate My Professors is widespread, and many professors have denounced the use of the site, although many faculty members have admitted to browsing their own ratings. The site has been criticized because it doesn't seek a representative sample of ratings, as some professors have almost 100 responses and others have fewer than 10.

Patrick Gallagher, associate professor of Spanish who boasts a healthy rating of 3.5 in overall quality, says he doesn't necessarily have a problem with the site.

"I don't have any trouble with a site like Rate My Professors, but if a person wants to go that route to figure out what kind of professor they want, I'd recommend that they read critically the comments because you can find out about (the person doing the rating) as well as the professor," Gallagher says.
Great class. So easy! my favorite class all semester. Prof Emmons is a really great guy, and his demonstrations are really cool.”
“Great Professor! Very clear and knowledge. The class is well organized and teaches you things that will stay with you a long time. I suggest that you do the workbook and go to class often, and also attend the test reviews,” lauds a former Seven Ideas student.

“Great class. So easy! My favorite class all semester. Prof Emmons is a really great guy, and his demonstrations are really cool,” extols another.

Ugran says she doesn’t necessarily look at the Web site just to find the easiest professor and is not always just looking for her grade point average because she has to be challenged sometimes and “can’t always expect to have the easiest teacher.” But if there’s one thing she does specifically go to the Web site for is to check the professor’s helpfulness rating.

“Even if it’s going to be hard, I want them to be able to encourage me to learn. And if I had a question that I could be able to find them, and they could give me advice and answer any questions I could have about homework or anything,” Ugran says. “Because I know college is about learning on your own and everything, sometimes you’ll need the help.”

Benjamin Wiford, a senior aeronautical systems engineering technology major, has known about Rate My Professors since his freshman year, but it wasn’t until his sophomore year that he really started using it.

When Wiford showed up for his first English II class of the semester, he encountered what he says was “a pretty crappy professor.” He says the class was “something ridiculous for a sophomore” as the course centered around a more-than-20-page research project. He dropped the course and made his way to Rate My Professors to see who would be a better fit.

“I actually found probably the greatest professor in the entire university,” he says. “It was such an easy course, and it worked out pretty good.”

Rating Rate My Professors

Despite the criticism geared toward Rate My Professors, according to a recent study done by two professors at the University of Maine, the correlation between some of the ratings on the Web site aren’t that far off from the university’s standard teaching evaluations.

“I was surprised that we got some of the correlations we did,” says Ted Coladarci, educational professor of psychology and one of the authors of the study. “I really went into this thinking Rate My Professors wouldn’t correlate with standard evaluations of teaching.”

He adds that he actually hoped the site wouldn’t correlate because the site doesn’t use representative samples and not many students actually leave comments. Coladarci, who bears an overall quality rating of 3.1 on Rate My Professors, warns that the correlation between student evaluations of teaching and the ratings on the site aren’t universally high. Professors who score well on Rate My Professors typically do well on student evaluations while the correlation is much weaker for those who score low on the site. With the results of the study, Coladarci and Irv Kornfield, the other author of the study and a professor of marine sciences, offer two policy recommendations. The first, which Coladarci said was offered with “some ambivalence” is that institutions should encourage students to consider posting ratings and comments on Rate My Professors.

“The point is that it’s not going to go away. People like those sorts of sources of information,” he says. “One thing a university could do, knowing Rate My Professors isn’t going to go away and that people like it, is to honestly encourage their students to use it responsibly.”

But Coladarci says the emphasis should be on leaving helpful and thoughtful comments.

“To me, it’s just not right for students in some cases to express in sarcasm and in insensitivity and inappropriate playfulness in offering their judgments about faculty,” he says. “Nobody benefits from it.”

The other policy recommendation Coladarci and Kornfield suggest — with “firm resolve,” according to the study — is that universities make the data acquired from student evaluations of teaching available online. Associate Provost Gayle Ormiston says teaching evaluations are important because they help resolve issues and are useful to the university for promotion purposes. Therefore, students shouldn’t blow off the evaluations.

“It’s important for students to take these evaluations seriously and not in an off-hand fashion because they are useful to the university,” he says, adding that there was some brief discussion a few years ago about making the evaluations public online, but that discussion has since been halted because of the heavy demands on the university’s Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.

As a student, Ugran says putting the teaching evaluations online is something she’d be interested in.

“I’d look at it,” Ugran says. “I’m sure there’d be more responses to read from because sometimes there are only one or two for a teacher and maybe the one will be bad — but you never know if they’re actually decent and you don’t realize it.”

Caperetta agrees.

“I think that’d be good because a lot of people don’t really know about (Rate My Professors) and don’t go on it or they’re too lazy to go rate teachers in their free time,” Caperetta said. “Since we do (evaluations) at the end of the semester, I think it’d be helpful.”

Quick Facts

- More than 65 percent of the ratings are positive.
- More than 6,000 schools have participated and nearly 1 million professors have been rated.
- The highest rated professor of 2007 was from Eastern Michigan University.
- The professor rated the hottest came from Manhattan College.

Source: RateMyProfessors.com

“Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson
Faculty Senate Chair Cheryl Casper says to provide this type of data would require a significant amount of university resources. The resources may be stretched thin because of the recent implementation of Banner, the university's new back-end system that will run FlashLine. Although the information is public record, she says some of the faculty may be wary of putting it all online.

"I don't think the faculty would be terribly thrilled," she says. "But they may recognize the information has some value."

Wiford says making the evaluations available online would be a great addition to FlashFAST, which recently replaced Web For Students under the switch to Banner. He says it'd make it easy to go back and forth between the scheduling system and the ratings.

Gallagher says he would be open to discussion about that possibility, but teaching evaluations are very complex, and it'd be difficult to categorize the stats online because so many courses aren't comparable. For instance, he says, a general introduction to psychology course will have much different ratings than a class such as elementary Spanish where there is a high level of interaction.

He says those are some of the issues that need to be ironed out.

"I don't know how I'd feel," Gallagher says, adding that his gut reaction is that he doesn't have any reason against it. "My evaluations aren't something I feel particularly embarrassed about."

But Gallagher says if he were a challenging professor, but had a high success rate of students going to graduate school or people becoming completely enamored by the subject, the online evaluations could be somewhat misleading.

Emmons says he'd back the idea of making the evaluations publicly available online in a manageable format.

"I would agree to that 100 percent," Emmons says. "The students are paying the bill here. They're paying my salary, so I think they should know how I'm doing."

Despite the possibility of teaching evaluations making it to the university's Web site, Ugran, who confesses she's addicted to the site, says she would be lost if Rate My Professors vanished.

"Well, it'd have to be how it was before all this came about, and I'll just have to go with whatever times are good and guess and hope it all turns out OK," she says about scheduling classes, adding that she wishes she'd known what she was getting into. "And I'd probably ask my friends again so I could repeat some of their teachers if they had good experiences with them."

Nonetheless, Ugran spent four hours by her computer one day trying to figure out what classes to take, shuffling between FlashFAST and RateMyProfessors.com, searching for just the right instructor and avoiding anyone with a rating she deemed unsatisfactory.

"Everyone else just seemed like they scheduled so fast, and was like, 'OK, I'm taking this class,'" she says. "I was like, 'We have to check the teacher! Who cares what time it is?'"

B. Tim Magaw is a junior newspaper journalism major. This is his first story for The Burr.
The Burr sent its reporters in pursuit of academia-with-a-twist by using the six story elements your third grade teacher dragged on and on about — who, what, when, where, why and how. They took those words and followed them with a question and a story. Who knew five W’s and a lone H could be so entertaining?
He's been at Kent State nearly two years now. You may have seen him pass through the Student Center. Maybe you've seen him shaking hands with a student or faculty member. But how much do you really know about Kent State's 11th president, Lester Lefton?

Here's a start: He's been married to his wife, Linda, for 37 years. He has one grandson and two grown daughters who live in Los Angeles and San Francisco. His passions range from technology to fitness. For instance, the self-described "exercise nut" used to bicycle 150 miles a week.

But the surprises don't end there. President Lefton shared more "fun facts" with The Burr, as did his daughter, Jesse, and his co-worker, Charlene Reed. Sometimes Jesse and Charlene guessed President Lefton's answers correctly. Other times, they provided insight only a daughter or co-worker could.

Read and discover what President Lefton prefers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorite TV show</th>
<th>College Education</th>
<th>Favorite Hobby</th>
<th>Favorite Meal</th>
<th>Favorite Music</th>
<th>Coffee Preference</th>
<th>Household Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Sopranos&quot;</td>
<td>Northeastern Univ.</td>
<td>He enjoys photography, reading and making stained-glass windows.</td>
<td>Italian — specifically chicken parmesan</td>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>&quot;Definitely black, strong and darkly roasted,&quot; President Lefton says, adding he is a frequent customer at Starbucks.</td>
<td>President Lefton says he used to be known as quite the &quot;domestic diva&quot; in his household — even creating a &quot;book&quot; called Lester's Laundry Tips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse; daughter,</td>
<td>Northeastern Univ.</td>
<td>&quot;He always has a bunch of different hobbies that have come and gone throughout the years.&quot; Those hobbies include biking, building model train sets and making stained-glass windows.</td>
<td>Italian, but Jesse says she has &quot;no guess&quot; about his actual favorite dish.</td>
<td>&quot;He's a huge show tunes lover,&quot; Jesse says. &quot;He owns like every Broadway show tune ever recorded and knows every word.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;He likes his coffee black and his scotch straight.&quot;</td>
<td>Jesse still remembers (and uses) Lester's Laundry Tips. &quot;He would be the first person I'd call if I had some sort of stain emergency,&quot; she says. &quot;He's the laundry man.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlene Reed;</td>
<td>Northeastern Univ.</td>
<td>In addition to making stained-glass windows (a few of which hang in his office), Charlene says President Lefton also loves going to theater performances.</td>
<td>Prior to his moving here, Charlene says the university took President Lefton to Luigi's, an Italian restaurant in Akron. But she says he also enjoys Thai food and seafood.</td>
<td>Classical music, jazz and Broadway tunes. Charlene says sound waves from 89.7 WKSU often float from President Lefton's office.</td>
<td>Black and strong, and Charlene says, &quot;He likes his Starbucks.&quot;</td>
<td>Laundry — Lester's Laundry Tips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coworker, secretary for the Board of Trustees</td>
<td>psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE BURR SPRING 2008
You enjoy sex for more than one reason.

It's more like

237.

Psychology researchers at The University of Texas at Austin reported that participants in the study had a total of 237 reasons why they have sex. Those range from "It feels good" to "1 want to give someone an STD."

You're poor.

Seventy-five percent of undergraduates and 92 percent of graduate students nationwide have a credit card. On average, graduate students are more than

12k

in debt.

Undergraduates average less than half that.

You drink more than others your age.

48 percent of alcohol consumed by four-year college students is swigged by students younger than 21. And full-time college students are more likely to engage in heavy drinking than part-time college students.

You abuse more illegal drugs than young adults did a decade ago.

1/2

of America's full-time college students abuse drugs and alcohol. From 1993 to 2005, the rate of those who use illegal drugs jumped from 5.4 percent to 8.2 percent. The rates of occasional drinkers, however, remained about the same.

You need help reading charts.

More than

50% of students

at four-year colleges and more than 75 percent at two-year colleges lacked the skills to perform complex literacy tasks. Those surveyed failed to interpret a table about exercise and blood pressure, understand the arguments of a newspaper editorial and compare credit card offers with different interest rates and annual fees.

Sources: The University of Texas at Austin; Archives of Sexual Behavior: August 2007; Survey by Nellie Mae loan company; Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University; Pew Charitable Trusts; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study

Reporting by Allison Smith

where to take your baseball addiction

Commentary by Jonas Fortune

It is 8:32 p.m. on a Tuesday, and I am taking it easy, just having a couple of drinks and hanging out with a few friends. My phone rings. "If you really want (Cleveland Indians reserve catcher Kelly) Shoppach, I am sure we can work something out," I tell the guy on the phone. "I'll only be looking for another backup player, maybe a relief pitcher in return."

My friends quickly began to moan. "Another trade!" tumbles out of their mouths in unison and disgust. They have all seen me do this before; they sometimes even call me obsessed. I don't care — this is fun.

Although I'm not Indians general manager Mark Shapiro, I am playing a game of baseball. Strat-O-Matic to be exact. Don't confuse this with a fantasy baseball league. That's for amateurs.

Strat is for the baseball die-hards. Since the '60s, it has provided a platform for those who want to look much deeper than a batting average and home run total. No offense to fantasy, but Strat puts you in control of a team like nothing I have ever played. You actually play the games out-by-out, all nine innings.

The game is purely based on statistics and probabilities with ratings systems in place for fielding range, throwing arms, bunting, base running and anything else you can average.

In the original board game, each player has his own stat card with ratings and probabilities. Players roll dice and match up the number to the player card and charts for the specific situation to figure out what happened on the play. Computer play is much simpler because the player only has to worry about decision making and building the team, as the program factors out the probabilities and on-field performance. The game is amazingly accurate, but who knew baseball was so scientific?

To dominate this game you must take everything into account. Florida Marlin's shortstop Hanley Ramirez can absolutely rake at the plate, but how bad will he hurt a team defensively?

It's also important to know that New York Yankee's all-world third baseman Alex Rodriguez is just as likely to walk or single against right-handed pitchers — as he is to hit a home run off them — he does all three about 15 percent of the time. He is more likely to strike out though, which he does 19 percent of the time.

Regardless, anyone is foolish not to take him. The ordinary person can't sit in the dugout and tell David Eckstein what to do a hit and run in the sixth game of the World Series. The ordinary person doesn't have millions of dollars to throw at free agents.

But with this game anyone can build a franchise and succeed. For Strat-O-Matic players, the emotions are as close as you can get without putting on a jockstrap and smearing on eye black.

Want to play?

Buy the board or electronic version at Strat-O-Matic.com ($70).
Or play for free at TheSportingNews.com.
Six Days

Beginning in the kitchen, some everyday foods can be forgotten in the depths of the fridge or the clutter of the counter.

Bread and eggs need to be discarded at the appropriate time. Store-bought bread generally lasts about six days, says Ed Hoegler, chef instructor of Kent State’s hospitality management program.

The type of bread, whether it is more natural or made with more preservatives, can affect its shelf life, says Jodie Luidhardt, a registered dietician and coordinator of the nutrition outreach program at Kent State.

If bread is refrigerated, it can last a couple more days, Hoegler says. Bread kept in the fridge needs to be warmed or set out to bring it back to room temperature.

Sometimes, bread kept in the fridge can be dry or soggy in some spots due to the moisture in the refrigerator, he says. At that point, bread can be ground down to make bread crumbs.

When it comes to spoilage, checking for mold is key.

Freshman exploratory major Natalie Riggs says she has picked off mold from the last pieces of bread so she could make a sandwich.

But Luidhardt says cutting around mold and eating the bread isn’t safe.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Web site, the visible mold on the surface layer of bread is not the only mold in it. Mold has roots, which can penetrate through the bread.

Two Weeks

Eggs can last about two weeks, says chef instructor Ed Hoegler. But make sure the refrigerator is around 33 to 36 degrees Fahrenheit. The shelf life is decreased if the temperature is more than 36 degrees. Food can become hazardous or spoiled if it is left for a long period of time in temperatures ranging from 40 to 140 degrees, the temperature danger zone for food. If it needs to be refrigerated, don’t let it sit out for more than one to two hours.

Sometimes, people may not remember when they purchased eggs and don’t know if they are still safe to eat.

“Crack it, and your nose will tell you right away,” Hoegler says.

In addition, the egg white may spread out in older eggs, unlike the tighter circle of egg white in a fresh one, he says.

Make sure to check eggs for cracks before eating them as well, to avoid the risk of salmonella, dietician Jodie Luidhardt says.

Four Weeks

Don’t wash with a mesh sponge or loofah if it’s been around longer than four weeks. Heather Funk, owner of the Boutique at Trillium Creek, a dermatology and skin care center in Medina, says loofahs and mesh sponges should be replaced every two to four weeks because bacteria collects on them. Old sponges and loofahs may become discolored and bits of visible dead skin accumulate in them.

For a cleaner loofah or mesh sponge, Funk says to rinse them after use and wash them out with shampoo or conditioner, towel-dry and keep them out of the shower. Keeping them out of the damp shower helps keep bacteria away.

Using an old mesh sponge or loofah can result in bacterial infections on the skin that may require a topical or oral prescription to treat, says Nicole Flesher, spa director at John Robert’s Spa.

Sophomore advertising major Kendra Neeb says she replaces her loofah every year, while Chad Patete, a sophomore biology and pre-med major, says he replaces his each semester.
Check the Bottle

When it comes to makeup, it’s not as simple. Different kinds of makeup have varying shelf lives. They also last different lengths of time after being opened.

Clinique brand foundations generally last a year unopened and four to five months once opened and used daily, says Terrie Panasiti, Clinique counter manager of the Stow-Kent Macy’s.

Other makeup brands, such as Revlon and Almay, have certain foundations that last 24 months after being opened.

If old foundations are used, they may cause sensitive skin to break out, burn or tingle, Panasiti says.

If foundations begin to smell odd or break down and change consistency, don’t use them, says Marcia Harding, a Clinique consultant at Stow-Kent Macy’s.

Makeup brushes and sponges do not need to be disposed of at regular intervals, but they do need to be cared for properly, Panasiti says.

Wash sponges after every use and wash brushes once a week if only one person uses them. If they are cleaned properly, they will last longer.

Sophomore business major Amanda Bignall cleans her brushes every two months with rubbing alcohol.

Three Months

Frayed, discolored bristles — if a toothbrush exhibits these characteristics, it’s time for a new one. Toothbrushes should be replaced approximately every three months, says Kathy Stralka, a registered dental hygienist at Martin Dental Care in Kent. However, if people can’t remember how long they’ve used the same toothbrush, certain physical signs will indicate when it should be thrown out. If the bristles start to flare out or change color, as some do to let users know it’s time, a new brush is needed, Stralka says. If it’s kept too long, teeth won’t get as clean as they could with a better brush.

“The bristles aren’t doing what they are supposed to be doing,” Stralka says.

Some Kent State students have different philosophies about toothbrush replacement. Robert Clouden Jr., a sophomore criminal justice major, says he doesn’t replace his brush until he visits the dentist and gets a new one.

Stephanie Grechny, a sophomore fashion merchandising and accounting major, replaces her toothbrush each year.

Stralka also says to get a new toothbrush after recovering from a cold or other sickness so bacteria isn’t lingering on the brush.

Mascara lasts three months after being opened, even though most will use it up before then with daily application, says Clinique counter manager Terrie Panasiti.

Both Revlon and Almay have mascaras that last six months after being opened.

Terry Panasiti of Macy’s advises not to pump the mascara before using it. People may think they are extracting more from the tube, but they are actually letting more air reach the mascara, drying it out. This can cause it to get flaky and is more likely to cause eye infections.

People should check manufacturer instructions if they are unsure how long to use a product. Some brands of makeup have a picture of an opened jar with a number next to it, such as 6M, on some of the packages. This means the products last six months once opened.

“If all else fails, read the box,” Panasiti says.

Five Years or Less

Before rolling on a condom, check the expiration date. The general shelf life of lubricated condoms is five years, but ones with spermicide have a shorter shelf life, says Lisette Anderson, a Planned Parenthood outreach specialist.

Store condoms in a cool place, not in a wallet or glove compartment, but don’t put them in the refrigerator, Anderson says.

According to the Web sites for Durex and Trojan brand condoms, they should be stored in a dry place as well.

Anderson recommends squeezing the individual package before using the condom to make sure air is inside. If there is no air, don’t risk using the condom.

Although it’s easy to spot obvious defects such as rips or holes, the Trojan condom Web site suggests feeling the condom before use to help people spot other damage. If the condom is brittle, gummy, sticky or is not a uniform color, don’t use it.
While munching on cereal each morning, the Flintstones are there for nutritional support. The cherry, orange and grape flavors not only taste deliciously similar to candy, but provide healthy supplements to the minerals your body may not be getting. But the vitamin counterparts of these happy Flintstone friends have a dark side.

As body image consumes many college students’ thoughts, not only does time spent at the gym increase, extraneous use of vitamins and minerals for healthy benefits does, too. The problem is, the latter can lead to an adverse effect that is more harmful than helpful — vitamin overdosing.

Rose Ann Chiurazzi, registered dietitian for the nutrition program for the Department of Recreational Services at Kent State, says, “Weightlifters, athletes and people who are obsessed with health are more likely to go overboard on vitamins.” She says they take more than they actually need because they think it will help improve their looks.

Though our bodies were designed to be exposed to vitamins (not to mention need them), the old adage can be applied here: Too much of a good thing is usually a bad thing.

According to reports from the New England Journal of Medicine, knowledge of the toxic effects of certain vitamins has been around for centuries. That awareness goes as far back as a 1597 diary from an explorer in Nova Zembla, an archipelago in the Arctic Ocean. While trying to survive during a brutal winter, the explorer and his team became “gravely ill” after consuming polar bear liver.

While that is probably not on your daily menu, the journal says high levels of vitamins harm the body. For example, overdosing on vitamin A (found most commonly in milk, dairy foods and, of course, polar bear liver) can lead to bone loss, liver damage and birth defects. Too much calcium can block the absorption of nutrients such as iron and zinc or cause kidney stones. An excess of niacin can cause skin redness and nausea.

Some nutrients interact with other nutrients by hindering their absorption. The proper absorbency of calcium and vitamin D depends on a balanced amount of each.

Vitamins found naturally in food are a healthier choice than meal supplements, which fill in the dietary gaps. But how much is enough?

Three-fourths of a cup of cereal, a multivitamin, two slices of bread and an energy bar is 685 micrograms over the recommended daily dose of folic acid. Too much folic acid can cause irreversible nerve damage if not treated. Chiurazzi says the problem results from taking an excess of total supplements, especially when you take three times more than what you need.

What’s one thing you want when you’re sick, besides sleep? Typically, the answer is to take as much vitamin C as possible. However, vitamins B and C are water-soluble, which means they are only stored in the body for a short amount of time before excreted. Chiurazzi says vitamins like A and D are fat-soluble and can be stored in high and even toxic amounts, which means you may be consuming more vitamins than you realize.

Chiurazzi suggests being careful with fortified foods and avoid abusing one type of vitamin. One key is to consume vitamins and minerals in moderation. She also recommends taking a multivitamin such as Centrum or One-A-Day, which provide a fool-proof dose of daily nutrients your body needs. Reading labels and paying attention to what percent of vitamins are healthy for an everyday diet gives you the right amount of a good thing.

Reporting by Jenna Atwater // Photography by Elizabeth Myers
Kent State students REALLY DRINK

Reporting by Rachel Abbey // Photography by Heidi Weber

You've seen the signs. You've read the posters. But does the "Thinking About Your Drinking?" campaign really represent Kent State students' drinking habits?

Kent State's survey is run through the Office of Student Health Promotion, says coordinator Scott Dotterer. The anonymous Web survey is sent out to a random sample of undergraduates in April, and about 700 to 800 typically choose to respond.

We wanted to find out for ourselves what Kent State undergrads had to say. We surveyed 159 of you around campus during different hours of the day as you studied, ate and hung out. Your responses were across the board — some students never drink, while others say they have at least one most nights of the week. One thing everyone had in common, however, was the somewhat sheepish laughter that accompanied the responses. The non- or light drinkers often said it was because they thought everyone else drank more than them; the heavier drinkers seemed to think their answers would shock.

Bottom line? Most everyone we surveyed seemed to feel like they are not the norm when it comes to drinking at Kent State.

Ohio matters

Reporting by Katie Cleary
Photography by Gavin Jackson

With eight, Ohio has the highest number of presidents elected from one state. In 2004, NBC's Tim Russert exclaimed "Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!" when it came down to which state would determine if George W. Bush would be re-elected or if John Kerry would take office. In March 2004, the final Democratic primary debate was held in Cleveland.

Historically, Ohio has played an important role in deciding the nation's next president. In recent history, no Republicans and only two Democrats have won the presidency without winning Ohio. But will this hold true for the 2008 general election?

Ohio is known as a swing state because it's never certain which way the it will vote. And it's citizens can be fickle. Ohio helped elect Democrat Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996, and then Republican George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004.

Ohio is also unique for two other reasons: Ohio has been called a miniature United States — with ethnic, class and educational diversity that can be paralleled to how the country is thinking as a whole. And unlike most of the country — where campaigns can predict how people will vote — Ohio is always up for grabs.

"Winning the 'open' regions, then, basically determines the winner of the election," says political science professor Thom Yantek.

Although primary turnout around the country was up, it is still not very high. Yantek has a few ideas of how this can change, including moving elections to weekends, having a national voting holiday and having the government play a more active role in recruiting voters. All campaigns go after the "youth vote," 18- to 24-year-olds, who seem to be much more invested in this election's turnout.

That demographic is increasing in numbers. The turnout at the Ohio March 4 primaries of voters younger than 30 jumped 12 percent from 2004, according to an analysis conducted by Maryland's Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement.

"The idea that a woman or a black man actually might break the white-male stranglehold on the presidency seems genuinely to appeal to a younger generation," Yantek says.

"President Bush seems to have energized the new generation of voters in a way that has not been seen in a long time. So, to a considerable degree, the 'excitement' is the result of an anti-Bush backlash."

In November, the nation will decide who will lead it through the next four years. If the catchesphrase is true, Buckeye votes will continue to play an important role in U.S. elections.
ABOVE: It's not just yarn that becomes James' medium. This knit graffiti outside Bowman Hall was constructed out of plastic bags. RIGHT: Bright pink knit graffiti located between Bowman and Olson halls brightens a snow-plagued campus. James creates the pieces in advance then fastens them to trees, poles and handrails in the evening with more yarn. Larger pieces can take up to a few hours to knit.
Granny’s knitting takes on a new look around campus

Reporting by Gabz Ciofani
Photography by Melissa Hosom

Sarah James does it discreetly in the middle of the night and makes sure no one is around before getting to work on her piece. Once she’s decided on a location, she prepares her materials.

“I’ve been tagging around Cleveland since last summer,” says the freshman magazine journalism major. She loves watching the reactions of people examining her pieces when they walk by.

James is one of the many up-and-coming graffiti artists putting a spin on the traditional form of street art. She tags with yarn.

Graffiti knitting gives people the opportunity to look at a nondestructive way of creating street artwork.

By knitting around and over objects such as trees and parking meters, groups like Knitta have been tagging bigger cities such as New York and San Francisco since August 2005. James is responsible for its appearance on campus in Fall 2007.

Her inspiration to tag came in the form of ugly yarn.

“My friend and I would walk around the craft store and marvel at all of the ugly things we saw — all of the furry, sparkly stuff. We wanted to use it, but in a mocking sort of way. We wanted the pieces to be as gaudy as possible.”

James has tagged objects ranging from stop signs to railings across campus and has done her fair share of interesting pieces around Cleveland, her hometown.

“I once made a covering to fit one of the spikes of the dinosaur statue outside of the natural history museum,” James says. “It was removed pretty soon after. I’ve discovered if there’s a way for people to take the piece off, they will.”

Kent State, however, doesn’t seem to mind the tree cozies and sign coverings. Only one of James’ pieces on campus has been removed — a red and blue furry piece from the railing in front of the M.A.C. Center.

Of the more than 10 softly stitched works around campus, one is particularly special to James.

“My favorite piece is the tree outside Olson Hall because it was the first piece I did at Kent,” she says.

“It was great. I went outside one morning after and saw that someone else had hung another scarf around one of those trees.”

Within this past semester, knitting clubs and tutorials have become common on campus, including groups such as “Knit Night at the OL” on Thursday nights in Olson Hall and Knitting Night at the MLC, which has scheduled meetings throughout the semester in the Music Listening Center on the Student Center’s second floor. Members of these crafting groups get together and work on projects in a light atmosphere while chatting among themselves.

“It’s extremely therapeutic,” says freshman photojournalism major Dana Beveridge, programmer of Knitting Night at the MLC.

A search for a deeper meaning in the brightly colored scraps may be seen in the puzzled glances of passersby. “I don’t know if I’m trying to convey anything specific with these pieces, but I like being a part of something that makes people aware of their surroundings,” James says. “I feel like the pieces make you stop and actually look at things.”

Whether it’s viewed as a way to bring colorful attention to everyday objects or just as a means of getting rid of excess yarn, there’s no denying that graffiti knitting has brought the idea of crafting out of Grandma’s living room and onto Kent State’s campus.

In regard to future projects, James refuses to reveal what she and her fellow knitters have in store for Kent.

“You’ll just have to look out for it when the weather gets nicer,” she says.

B. Gabz Ciofani is a junior magazine journalism major. This is her first story for The Burr.
A brief history of the lady who’s bringing
good old-fashioned sexy back ...
and why she’s here to stay

Reporting by Gabz Ciofani
Photography by Heidi Weber

Almost 80 years since her inception,
the classic pinup breathes again.

The term “pinup” was coined during World War II, when
American soldiers would pin up pictures of seductive women from
postcards, calendars and magazines
in their aircraft and bunks. “Pinup
girls” refer to the women who appeared on the photographs
and paintings — sexy yet sophisticated, not revealing too
much and very friendly.

The classic pinup has come full circle, and women’s studies
instructor Suzanne Holt has a theory as to why.

“I hope that the classic pinup is coming back because the
new porn standard for girls and women that took the USA
by storm is getting old,” she says. “Although we might be
laugh-tracked into thinking a Little Miss Sunshine is funny
to watch as she grinds her prepubescent, half-clad body in a
pole dance routine designed for comic effect, it’s ceased to
be quite so amusing to watch a generation of girls, sisters,
daughters, peers, live it out in three dimensions. Perhaps
because we’ve actually paused our chuckling over the
pathetic spiral down of Britney Spears, or maybe because
it’s not that gratifying to obligatorily flaunt your body or feel
yourself reduced to that.”
Whether these reasons factor in, one thing is certain — there are definite signs that the pinup is making her way back to the forefront of pop culture. But where did she come from?

The atmosphere of the 1920s was one of change, setting the stage for the pinup. The 19th Amendment had just been ratified, extending the vote to women, and they began reworking the idea of what was considered appropriate in their own eyes. Skirts became shorter, dancing became livelier, and women’s sexuality was in the early stages of becoming less repressed.

In the 1930s, the famous artwork of Alberto Vargas and George Petty increased in popularity and Esquire magazine began carrying illustrations and pinup art from the artists on a regular basis. Soon other publications followed suit.

Although the competition was heavy in the 1940s from other girls like Rita Hayworth and Carole Landis, Betty Grable was undoubtedly the most popular pinup girl among American soldiers of the WWII era. Hugh Hefner credits Grable, with legs that were insured by her studio for $1 million each, as being the inspiration for his Playboy empire.

“I hope the classic pinup look is coming back because the new porn standard for girls and women that took the USA by storm is getting old.”

Grable’s famous bathing suit photo taken by Frank Powolny was reproduced on the noses of hundreds of Air Force bombers and is currently featured in Life Magazine’s 100 Photos that Changed the World.

In December 1953, the pinup took it all off. Playboy’s first issue had Marilyn Monroe on the cover and promised full color nude pictures inside. The magazine printed about 54,000 copies and sold out within weeks. Penthouse, Oui, and Gallery also emerged on the scene to provide readers with modern, mostly nude pinups. Though these magazines sold well during the ’70s, their popularity faded as pornographic films started to define sex and sexy.

More recently, however, many men’s magazines such as Blender, Maxim and Smooth feature non-nude pinups of actresses or celebrities accompanied by interviews. Even Vanity Fair has gotten in on the act. The switch to clothed pinups has been successful for these magazines and serves the purpose of reminding modern society what pinups were like when they first came onto the scene — clothed, mysterious and still seductive.

“I hope that what this means is that women are looking for a better model to which they may aspire,” Holt says. “One wherein being attractive and, yes, sexy is balanced by the far more substantive qualities of being ... intelligent, classy, genuine, respect-worthy, capable and poised.”

B. Gabz Ciofani is a junior magazine journalism major. This is her second story for The Burr.

Hints of the pinup motif and style can be seen everywhere — from Amy Winehouse’s hairstyle to these segments of pop culture and fashion.

CLOTHING

The pinup has had its effect on modern fashion as well. The Sailor Jerry clothing line is just one example of a brand that exemplifies the classic pinup with merchandise for both men and women. The clothing line includes classic pinups drawn by Norman Collins (Sailor Jerry) that were frequently used as centerpieces for older tattoos and are now the features of the clothing line’s products. The Sailor Jerry clothing line has put classic pinup girls on T-shirts, jackets, bags and even shoes.

TATTOOS

The classic pinup has made her way from bombs to bodies. “Tattoos of pinups are more popular now than ever,” says Curtis Webb, a tattoo artist at the Skeleton Key Tattoo Company in Akron. “A pinup girl makes for a great tattoo as long as it’s done proportionately and correctly.”

MAGAZINES

The influence of the vintage pinup is also reappearing in current issues of both men’s and women’s magazines. The girls aren’t the same, but the lighting, makeup, wardrobe, stance and less provocative seduction tactics all are reminiscent of the classic pinup.
"I don’t remember me actually drawing or what I yelled at him."

"I cringe at the mere thought of a gun now, and if I had to go to a school where I knew people other than law enforcement were legally able to carry them, I would not feel safe." "Just because I go to college doesn’t mean I shouldn’t be able to protect myself here when I am able to protect myself in my house ..." "It’s almost like having a child. You are responsible from the moment that you agree to take (the gun with you) to the moment that you lock it back up." "But when I think that my friend Jeremy might be alive if a good student had been armed, it makes me miss him more." "I was on (the Virginia Tech) campus the day of April 16, and I was not in any frame of mind to be in possession of a gun. I was jumpy, traumatized, hiding under a table; and who is to say that if I would have been carrying a gun that I would not have accidentally hurt someone while trying to protect myself ...?"

---

THE LAST GREAT GUN DEBATE

A line has been drawn between those for and against guns on campus as a culture of caution becomes the norm for U.S. students »
students attending public universities in Ohio might find the idea of sitting in a classroom where students may be carrying handguns an absurd notion, especially at Kent State. The May 4 tragedy-turned-legacy makes the issue of guns even more charged than at other universities. Some people, however, are attempting to push Ohio legislators to allow concealed carry laws to cross over onto public campuses.

In 2004, then-governor Bob Taft signed a bill that was a hot button issue with citizens of the Buckeye state. Gun control advocates were enraged and Second Amendment supporters were ecstatic: Ohio sheriff offices could grant licenses to those who paid a fee, underwent training and passed certain restrictions. Proponents of the legislation say the license helps reduce crime and provides people a means of self-defense. Others disagree and say more guns are not going to solve a problem started by guns in the first place.

The main one-two punch for the people who support the law is the shootings at Virginia Tech that took 33 lives with dozens more wounded. Even more recently, the tragedy at Northern Illinois University is making more students edgy about being able to protect themselves while on campus.

In the wake is a debate brewing from a campus culture of fear. To carry or not to carry: that is the question.

The Law in Ohio

Ohio is a “shall-issue” state, says firearms trainer Amanda Suffecool of Targeting, a Portage County company that offers safety training. “Shall-issue” means as long as the applicant is not restricted — for example, a convicted felon cannot apply for a permit — he or she can obtain a license. Ohio law requires at least 12 hours of training before granting the license.

“It’s almost like having a child. You are responsible from the moment that you agree to take (the gun with you) to the moment that you lock it back up,” Suffecool says.

Targeting has trained somewhere around 1,000 people, she says. From the young to the old, people with walkers and wheelchairs, men and women.

The most significant applicant Suffecool remembers is a 69-year-old woman who had carried a gun since her 30th birthday. The woman told her that she did not like being illegal, but her job put her in jeopardy and the gun helped her feel safe.

Not every business allows concealed carry license holders to bring their firearm into its establishment and, by law, firearms are not allowed in government buildings. These places include rest stops, courthouses and police stations. The law also covers public universities, which are partially funded by the government. However, that area of the law has developed an opposition.

Phoenix Rising

Four years after the law was passed, the debate over whether people should be allowed to carry hidden firearms has burned out and is rarely discussed in everyday conversation or in university classrooms. But from the ashes of that debate, the tragic massacre at Virginia Tech and the killings at the Northern Illinois University have given rise to a new question — should public universities be required to let licensees bring their guns on campus? Will this help prevent more blood from being spilled at universities, or will it lead to shooting wars during arguments?

Members of the national group Students for Concealed Carry on Campus do not think a war-zone scenario is plausible.

“Given the predictions of (people who opposed concealed carry laws) in every state where concealed carry laws were introduced have been proven false, like arguments over parking spaces turning into shoot-outs, places turning into the Wild West and blood running down the street,” says Mike Flitcraft, a sophomore mechanical engineering technology major at the University of Cincinnati. “Why should we assume any differently on college campuses?”

Flitcraft has been involved with SCCC almost since the beginning of the organization — first as a campus leader and now as national organizer for the group. He says he first got involved when shots were fired on the porch of a residence hall at his school.

He has a permit and says he had to draw one time but “thankfully” he did not have to use it. He was walking around his neighborhood in Cincinnati when he passed a young man leaning against a post with two bags at his feet. The man asked him if he was in a hurry and Flitcraft responded, “I can’t help you, bud.” The man began to run after him, yelling threats before reaching into his pocket menacingly. Flitcraft did not know what the man had but “was not about to find out after being threatened” and pulled his firearm from its holster.

“I don’t remember me actually drawing or what I yelled at him,” he says. “But when I drew my firearm, he did a 180 and ran full-bore in the other direction.”

Before this frightening incident, he says he hated putting his pistol on his hip because some people think license holders are just “looking for a reason to shoot somebody,” but the firearm itself is a reminder of why he carried the weapon in the first place.

“It was also the one thing that may have saved my life, and I didn’t have to pull the trigger,” he says. “My hands were shaking too much to dial 911 for over half an hour. My pistol is now the ultimate reminder to me that I have an option to live, when I otherwise may not have had that option.”

“My pistol is now the ultimate reminder to me that I have an option to live, when I otherwise may not have had that option.”
Flicraft agrees, citing the "harsh background check" and having fingerprints and a photograph taken by law enforcement as evidence of security. The real worry is not from people who get the permit but, rather, those who carry guns illegally, he says.

"Criminals know that those on a campus will be disarmed. Change that and they will think twice about looking for victims in our schools," says Ken Stanton in an e-mail. Stanton is a doctoral candidate in engineering education and graduate teaching assistant of engineering exploration at Virginia Tech. He also is the university's SCCC leader.

Gun-free zones are another sore subject for proponents of concealed carry — Stanton calls them "victim-rich zones." Flicraft refers to them as "criminal protection zones" that "logically serve no purpose."

"If somebody is going to commit an illegal activity, is telling them that they're not allowed to do it or making it more illegal going to stop them?" he says.

Supporters of concealed carrying on campus agree that shootings like those that happened at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University could have been stopped if a student had his or her concealed weapon. Stanton says his last thought was that if more students had guns, then they might have been able to stop the massacre at his college.

"When I think that my friend Jeremy might be alive if a good student had been armed, it makes me miss him even more," he says.

More guns beget more violence

The opponents of concealed carry on campus cannot be ignored. After all, the United States has the highest death-by-firearms rate compared with other wealthy countries, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Saying that more guns, whether concealed or not, is going to solve a problem created solely by guns in the first place is faulty logic to me," says Megan Meadows, a junior communications and theater major at Virginia Tech.

Meadows thinks allowing concealed weapons on campus would be a regression for gun laws because it would open a "new can of worms" and cause more violence than what already exists at universities. There is a reason legislation has made school zones gun-free and acts as a precaution to make sure nothing happens, she says, adding she would not feel safe if people were allowed to carry weapons on campus.

"Would we allow students and teachers to carry nunchucks or swords?" she asks. "Allowing concealed carry on campus promotes violence in the academic setting. It's wrong."

Trudy Steuerneagle, a Kent State political science professor, seconds Meadows' opinion, especially with Kent State's tragic history that left four students dead in 1970.

"I would hate to see guns on campus at Kent State," she says. "It would just seem wrong."

Steuerneagle thinks the majority of campuses are safe and the few tragedies that do happen are horrible, but having concealed weapons would be outweighed by a potential for disaster.

She says the reason for the massive amounts of media attention on the Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University shootings is they are "so rare."

She does not believe there is any way the Northern Illinois University shootings could have been prevented, even though we wish we could predict tragedies like that so we would know how to stop them from happening.

"I was on (the Virginia Tech) campus the day of April 16, and I was not in any frame of mind to be in possession of a gun," Meadows says. "I was jumpy, traumatized, hiding under a table, and who is to say that if I would have been carrying a gun that I would not have accidentally hurt someone while trying to protect myself in my shaken state."

That is a big 'what-if.'"

Meadows started a Facebook group called "Students Against Concealed Carry on Campus" when she noticed all of the Facebook groups that were for the laws to carry. She says she was shocked to find letting guns into schools was even an issue because it made no sense to her. The massacre at her school took the life of one of her closest friends, and it has become her "personal mission" to prevent others from having to go through the ordeal she did.

"To me, this means lobbying for stricter mental health and gun laws, which includes keeping guns off of school campuses," she says. "I cringe at the mere thought of a gun now, and if I had to go to a school where I knew people other than law enforcement were legally able to carry them, I would not feel safe."

Other people walk a razor-wire line over the issue, seeing the dangers of the law but not denying the benefits. Travis Oberlin, a Kent State political science and history major, says he doesn't really trust people and definitely doesn't trust people with guns. "A lot of things can happen and a lot of worse things can happen if guns are involved," he says.

He says he can see how the Virginia Tech shootings could have been stopped with the help of a person with a concealed carry permit, but at the same time there could be a lot more incidents in places like parking lots where emotions can run high.

"If someone not feeling safe at night has a gun, they could hear something and they're going to pull the gun out," he says. "It could end pretty badly."

The outcome of the debate remains to be seen, but both sides are gaining more and more attention — and members, SCCS grew at a rate of 1,000 members a day for four straight days in February after five students and the gunman were killed at Northern Illinois University. Even Meadows’ Facebook group is seeing a rise in numbers. State legislators seem to be sweeping the issue under a rug, but with the growing media attention — SCCS is even being challenged by the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence — and growing support, it's not something that will be able to be hidden for long. Sooner or later, someone will have to decide.

B. Ted Hamilton is a senior magazine journalism major. This is his second story for The Burr.
Advice straight from the vine for pairing which food with what wine

If there’s one thing Geography of Wine instructor Tony Carlucci wants students to realize about pairing food and wine, it’s that there is no “Coca-Cola of wines.”

Carlucci, Kent State instructor and wine educator, says one of the biggest mistakes students and new wine drinkers make is to only drink what they like, regardless of what might taste best with a particular food.

How can students make wise decisions about food and wine pairings when they’re eating at home, with friends or out with the boss? Carlucci advises keeping an open mind, learning from those around you and keeping pairings simple to start with. He says a good “rule of thumb is red with red and white with white,” meaning red wines with red meat and white wines with white meat. With all the varieties available today, picking a wine can be confusing, and having a basic understanding of the differences between reds and whites can be helpful.
Advice straight from the vine for pairing which food with what wine

If there’s one thing Geography of Wine instructor Tony Carlucci wants students to realize about pairing food and wine, it’s that there is no “Coca-Cola of wines.”

Carlucci, Kent State instructor and wine educator, says one of the biggest mistakes students and new wine drinkers make is to only drink what they like, regardless of what might taste best with a particular food.

How can students make wise decisions about food and wine pairings when they’re eating at home, with friends or out with the boss? Carlucci advises keeping an open mind, learning from those around you and keeping pairings simple to start with. He says a good “rule of thumb is red with red and white with white,” meaning red wines with red meat and white wines with white meat. With all the varieties available today, picking a wine can be confusing, and having a basic understanding of the differences between reds and whites can be helpful.
Where the Winos Go:

**Riverside Wine & Imports**
911 N. Mantua St.
Kent, OH 44240
(330) 677-4400
riverside-wines.com

Riverside offers more than 1,800 labels, with about 80 percent of its stock coming from U.S. wineries and 1 to 2 percent of that group from Ohio. Many white wines cost $14 to $25, while many reds range in price from $16 to $30. Champagne and ice wine are available for less than $20. Riverside also hosts monthly tastings — some with winemakers or winery owners — on weeknights and Saturday afternoons. Try a wine sample “flight,” which has 2-ounce glasses of three different wines.

**West Point Market**
1711 W. Market St.
Akron, OH 44313
(800) 838-2156
westpointmarket.com

West Point Market offers more than 3,000 wine varieties and a knowledgeable staff. The “12 Under $12” section features 12 wines for those on a budget, and a new section features three to four suggested wines based on buyers’ favorites. Ninety-five percent of wines start at the state minimum. Domestic wines make up half to a third of the stock, which includes a large Italian import section and a small selection of Ohio wines.

**Western Reserve Wines**
28300 Miles Road
Solon, OH 44139
(440) 498-9463
westernreservewines.com

With a staff whose expertise is in European wines, Western Reserve Wines offers a 50-50 mix of domestic and imported wines. White wines start as low as $5, while reds start between $8 and $10. Some wines cost several hundred dollars, but a bottle of Champagne starts at $30, and a variety of ice wines are available for as low as $11.

**Campus Wine Cellar**
1655 E. Main St.
Kent, OH 44240
(330) 673-1589

Both red and white wines are priced as low as $4, but most bottles are in the $10 to $15 range. Sparkling wines start as low as $5, Champagne starts at $32, and several ice wines are available in the $23 to $30 range. Call for information about upcoming tastings.

**101 Bottles of Beer on the Wall**
115 N. Willow St.
Kent, OH 44240
(330) 677-9444

101 Bottles offers more than 1,700 wines in prices to suit every budget. White and red wines are priced from $5 to $65. Sparkling wines are priced as low as $6, and Champagne is available for $7.50 and up. Wine tastings are held about once every month. Call for more information about dates and times.

For more wineries, visit theburr.com.
Tips to being eco-friendly all while keeping the green where it belongs – in your wallet

**Reporting by Sarah Nusinow // Photography by Abigail S. Fisher**

An alliterative ad campaign was embedded into everyone’s minds as they grew up: reduce, reuse and recycle. Now, turning off the lights when you aren’t in the room and separating plastic from paper for Monday morning pickup are only the first two ingredients in the eco-friendly pie. In school, students were always told how these little words had a bigger impact than they knew, and today, it is blatantly clear just what those teachers meant. The three R’s are becoming the topic of choice for trendy magazines and they’re making headlines on the front pages of newspapers. Last year’s buzzword? Green.

The trendy aspects of being completely green require a bank account that would make most college students’ jaws drop. And the thought of having that much financial flexibility, much less stability, is just that — a thought. You may think the three R’s are about as far as you’re going to get when it comes to being green, but you may be wrong.

“In my experience the ‘expense’ is in time; it does take time to be green and it takes thought,” says Robert Heath, professor of biological sciences. “It’s not a ‘no-brainer.’ You have to keep asking yourself how best to do something.”

“Being green” has morphed into something much more than what it meant a decade ago. From pumping vegetable oil instead of gasoline to Nike’s Trash Talk shoes made completely from recycled material — reduce, reuse and recycle has come a long way. For college students, it can mean cheap, cost-effective ways to show support for the new “it” trend that really does affect the future.

**DIY STYLE**

The winter jacket that has faithfully kept you warm for two winters is starting to look outdated, but parting ways isn’t necessary to stay stylish. Head to a nearby fabric store and buy new buttons (in different colors, shapes or sizes than your old ones), some thread and a needle. Remove the old buttons and hand-sew the new buttons on. This will make your coat seem fresh and new. If the jacket is belted, buy fabric or a thick ribbon and simply tie it around for an instantly updated look. Are your shoes looking beat up or do you simply want some more color? Wrap colored electrical tape around the heels.

**SAVE YOUR GREEN**

- Colored electrical tape — $3
- Bag of buttons, Joann.com — $1.99
- Roll of ribbon (about ten yards) — $4 - $12
TECHNOLOGY

Unplug it, turn it off and let it rest! When you’re gone for the day at work or asleep at night, turn off your computer or at least put it in sleep mode. If you use the dishwasher instead of hand cleaning all those dirty pots and pans, don’t use the pre-wash cycle or even hand-rinse them. Just scrape off leftover food — this will save about 20 gallons of water a day.

FOOD

Buy in bulk. If a cracker with peanut butter is your favorite snack, shop for both of these items at a grocery store that sells wholesale foods or foods in bulk. It will be cheaper in the long run and last longer, too. Not only are you saving money, but you’re saving trash as well. Though both of these items come in recyclable plastic and cardboard, some foods do not — the less trash accumulated, the better.

DIY HOME DÉCOR

Magazines are great coffee table accessories, but why not use them to build the coffee table itself or to create stools? Because many glossy magazines aren’t as recyclable as newspapers, this is a great way to keep them out of landfills.

First, find a thick piece of cardboard that will be used for the bottom. Then, grab a stack of magazines (about 20 or 25) and bundle them horizontally and vertically with a thick piece of twine, which you can buy at craft or hardware stores. Repeat this process until you have four stacks. Place two stacks on top of each other and bundle them into one. Then place these two separate stacks side by side on the cardboard and bundle this all together. Now they’re ready to give guests a place to sit, prop up their feet and set their drinks.

SAVE YOUR GREEN

Jute packaging twine from joann.com (150 feet) — $1.99
Forgotten magazines — free

Do you have what it takes to be green? Take the quiz at theburr.com.
TAG, TONY, TAG

Reporting & Photography by Heidi Weber
Graffiti Hurts, a national grassroots education program, has a chapter in Akron. The premise of the program is to clean up the markings made by “someone with no respect for public or private property.” But beauty proves to be in the eye of the beholder when it comes to street graffiti. The law calls it a crime, but Tony doesn’t care. The 20-year-old Akron native has been tagging for three years. He says he never thought he could do it, but it turned out to not be as difficult as he expected. He painted the above piece in two hours. In 2005, under the alias “Seal” he joined a graffiti crew called Droids, which includes other artists from Chicago, Los Angeles, Florida, New York and Phoenix. “It has definitely taken me a lot of places,” he says in regard to tags all over Ohio, Chicago, Detroit and Indianapolis. Tagging is a rush for Tony, but he realizes it’s one with potential consequences. “It’s definitely something that runs through my head. I’m consciously breaking the law,” he says. “But, you have to pay to play.” He tags randomly, as often as possible, which amounts to about once a week, and has been chased by the police more times than he would like to count. “They’re doing their job, and I’m not mad at them. I just think the penalties are too harsh. If I get caught I’ll be thrown in the same cell as drug dealers and rapists.”
"The best feeling is when you finish a piece. It's like instant gratification. I did what I came here to do. Now I have to step up my game and top that. I guess it's a good feeling and a bad feeling at the same time. It's like what's next?"

RIGHT: Tony uses at least six $4 cans of Rust-Oleum spray paint for each piece. "It's an expensive habit," he says. FAR RIGHT: For Tony, the city is an empty canvas. "Wouldn't you love to see some graffiti up there? How do you think I can get up there?" he says, pointing. His eye is constantly looking for new places to tag.
ABOVE: Tony's pieces are displayed at Evolution Skatepark in Canton alongside works from graffiti artists from all over the country. Skaters take a break and watch him tag. LEFT: "It's just disrespectful to tag in someone else's spot," he says. If someone you aren't acquainted with tags in your territory, it's fair game to be defaced, he adds. "It's kind of like saying, 'Hey, it's not cool to paint here.'" This tunnel is one of Tony's favorite places to paint.
As the Ramones-core scene fades to black, some of the key players face the reality of working real jobs, while a few still rock.
Mike Holt lies in his bed after a late night.

About 10 days into a full-blown U.S. tour, his band, the Huntingtons, has crashed at a hotel at about 2 a.m. on its way from Dallas to Oklahoma. The pop-punk rockers have been touring more since 1999. Holt, who is the front man of the group, recently quit his day job to make music a full-time endeavor.

There’s a knock at the door. Holt answers it to find guitarist Andy Dibiaso on the other side. In a moment, the reality of what Dibiaso is about to say will whack Holt like a two-by-four against the back of his tired head.

"(It) hurt really bad," Holt, 31, says nearly six years later. "It put a dent on everyone’s spirit to continue touring. We didn’t really ever make money with the band. We just kind of paid enough to make our way. Once that hit, we realized, ‘Hey, that’s no real way to live — to just live day to day.’"

What Dibiaso told Holt was something every young or small act dreads: Thieves broke into the band’s trailer and stole up to $20,000 worth of equipment. To finish the remainder of the tour, Huntingtons borrow other bands’ gear, but it’s the beginning of the end.

Huntingtons was part of the punk scene — including bands such as the Queers, Screeching Weasel, the Mr. T Experience, the Donnas and countless others — whose existence relied mainly on one band: the Ramones, one of the first punk bands of the mid-’70s.

The Ramones was a band embodying the simplicity of late ’50s, early ’60s rock ’n’ roll, mixed with a previously unheard of drive and energy. Unlike their British counterparts, the Sex Pistols or the Clash, members of the Ramones, for the most part, never preached a political agenda. Instead they focused their songs on alienation, bubblegum pop rock, self-deprecating humor and not fitting in with society.

Once the dust settled from the Green Day punk explosion of the ’90s, most of these musicians had no other choice but to drop their instruments and become part of society. The result might not have clicked with the music, but to the sound of inevitability, it made perfect sense.

Holt had responsibilities. He’d been married three years and couldn’t afford to keep putting money into something that wasn’t giving him a return. Shortly after the band’s equipment was stolen, he reclaimed his job at the U.S. Department of Defense, where he now works on improving chemical and biological defense. He’s just your typical ex-punk-rocker-turned-government-worker.

Holt and his wife welcomed their first child, Petra, in 2004, and by summer 2005, the band was no more, releasing one final hits album aptly titled, Growing Up Is No Fun.
Q&A with the Phil Spector of punk rock

Music producers aren’t typically household names, although they’re ultimately responsible for the sound and quality of an album.

Mass Giorgini first made his mark with Ramones-influenced bands including Screeching Weasel, the Queers, the Beatnik Termites, Huntington’s, the Riverdales, Teen Idols and many more. Recently, he’s worked with more mainstreams such as Anti-Flag and Alkaline Trio, and has also collaborated with Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day and Kris Roe of the Ataris.

To say he simply oversees the music is an understatement. A former member of Screeching Weasel and Common Rider, he also plays bass for Squirtgun, which performed the opening song of Kevin Smith’s 1995 comedy, Mallrats.

Especially instrumental in helping the success of indie punk label Lookout! Records, Giorgini has seen a lot change in the punk scene since his involvement in the mid-’80s.

― J.S.

THE BURR: What do you think your personal touch or contribution is to recording?

MASS GIORGINI: For better or for worse, my work has been associated with the pop-punk sound. I think that whole genre definitely got an influence from me. Whether it was good or bad, I don’t know. I think my emphasis was on trying to keep the song the focus and the energy. The way I felt the energy was being communicated was by having a pretty big wall of guitar, like you would live when you’re standing in front of the stage. I wanted to make sure that the recordings were capturing what I felt were the strong points of the song. Sometimes, people focus too much on the perfection and not enough on the passion.

TB: What distinguishes the Lookout! Records bands from other punk groups?

MG: I think some of the bands that came along didn’t have the same level of passion as some of the bands that were there before. It became more and more of a business for a lot of the bands. A lot of people were focusing on how many albums were being sold, what magazines were putting out the ad, who was interviewing you, instead of just, “Hey, we got a great set of songs. Let’s put an album out.” The emphasis became a little less naive. It was that beautiful naive, that youthful exuberance, if you will. That youthful exuberance works very well with punk rock. It’s that teenage angst, and yet happiness to be able express oneself, break out and feel like they can change the world. I think Lookout! was famous because of that sparkle.

TB: What is the underlining legacy of these bands?

MG: The big thing is that they’ve brought back both an innocence and a simplicity to punk rock that it needed. Green Day is the band that did it more than anything. They really did change the mainstream. In the punk rock scene, the people that have kept that alive are bands like the Queers. The whole movement at Lookout! Records really brought back the original spirit of rock.

TB: Do you think some of that original rock and roll spirit is lacking in today’s music?

MG: There seems to be a little bit of a lack of that attitude right now. I still think it’s there. I just don’t know if the fans’ interests at this moment are lining up with that. I think it’s just a matter of time because as the scene changes, they’ll find, “Well wait a minute. Where’s all that fun? Where’s that attitude? Where’s that rebellion? Where’s that thing that makes me want to jump up and down and shake my fist in the air?” When they see that it’s not there, the next band that comes along and gives it to them is going to be the hero of the day again and revitalize the scene. It’s a cycle.

Debuted in: 1982
You May Know Them: Have been described as the lovechild of the Ramones and the Beach Boys.
Where Are They Now: Juggling life at home with life on tour.

Debuted in: 1985
You May Know Them: The Ben Affleck movie, Glory Daze, featured three of their songs.
Where Are They Now: Inactive since 2005, the lead singer has focused on his writing career.

Debuted in: 1986
You May Know Them: Green Day, blink-182, Rancid and The All-American Rejects cite them as influential to their music.
Where Are They Now: Writing books.

Debuted in: 1987
You May Know Them: As a prominent surf-rock band from Cleveland. They were one of Kurt Cobain’s favorite bands.
Where Are They Now: Putting out an album about every six years.

Debuted in: 1993
You May Know Them: They once played as Joey Ramone’s backing band at CBGB’s.
Where Are They Now: Called it quits in 2005. Lead singer is now a self-proclaimed family man.

“Kind of just realizing responsibilities and so forth — that we can’t live with our parents for the rest of our lives, mooch off of relatives whenever we’re home,” he says. “It was a growing-up phase more than anything else because we never made enough money.”

In the 9-to-5 world

“No it’s not my place / In the 9 to 5 world,” Joey Ramone sings on 1981’s Pleasant Dreams. He and the rest of the Ramones were able to live by that anthem during and after the group’s 22-year existence.

That’s pretty impressive for a band various critics say never evolved. It’s true. Guitarist Johnny Ramone claimed he refused to keep a guitar at home because he believed most bands only got worse with age and experience.

Unfortunately for most bands playing this brand of music, it’s more of a job or a hobby and less a career. Cleveland/Baltimore-based, surf-punk trio the Beatnik Termites released its latest album, Girl Crazy, in 2003. Lead-vocalist and guitarist Pat Kim says he and the band plan on recording the next album this summer.

After 1997, the band quit regularly releasing material. Instead, Kim, 41, focused on building his and bandmate Reggie Silvestri’s record label, Insubordination Records. But like Holt, Kim also works for the government for his main source of income as an IT guy for the Maryland Workers’ Compensation Commission.

So, what’s with these punk rockers working for the government? Isn’t the whole suit-and-tie office thing against some sort of code?

“Obviously, I haven’t been able to make a living off this musically, thus far,” Kim says. “I don’t really see anything odd about it. It’s a great way to finance a label. In the software industry, it’s pretty easy to find a job that pays pretty well, too. It sure beats the hell out of sleeping on floors, living in a van all the time, which I’ve done, don’t get me
wrong. But I can’t live like that forever.”

Kim says he quit his job several times to try to make the band work, but in the end fell back on his education in computer science. Of course, in the punk rock community, there are always the purist naysayers.

“In the early ’90s when I first started working in the corporate world, a lot of punks would call me ‘sellout’ because I have to wear a suit to work,” Kim says. “I’m like, ‘Dude, I’m the one who doesn’t have to sell out because I don’t have to compromise my music.’ It’s not putting food on the table for me, so I can do whatever I want.”

A book about rock ‘n’ roll

Retired and occasional, Ramones-core punk rockers can do other things besides strum guitars, work with computers and design chemical and biological weapons. In the case of “Dr. Frank” Portman (whose brother, John Portman, is a physicist at Kent State), frontman of the Mr. T Experience, writing young adult novels is also a viable career move.

The Mr. T Experience — or MTX — was part of the big three bands that held together this particular scene. Known for his “songs about girls,” Portman takes his witty and at times poetic songwriting to the page in his novel, King Dork, leaving his band on “standby.”

“It’s a little bit better gig than rock and roll for me,” says Portman, who describes time spent with the band as “a combination of income and debt.” “I was bailed out by my book,” he continues. “You’ve gotta put a whole lot into being a band. It’s hard to do it here and there.”

MTX started in 1985 and continued going strong through 2004. Though Portman says he would eventually like to make another record, he’d rather focus on his literary opportunities. As of right now, he’s completed his second young-adult novel, Andromeda Klein, to be released in summer 2009, according to Amazon.

Other potentially exciting news for Portman includes a possible movie adaptation for his debut novel, another reason the 43-year-old rock ‘n’ roll writer is spending more time with his laptop than with his guitar.

“I can’t really see how that would make economic sense — to record a full-on rock ‘n’ roll album,” Portman says. “If you can’t sell any units, I don’t see how you can possibly do it.”

Portman is an unusual example in the punk afterlife. While many are now office or classroom dwellers, he still has the opportunity to write and get paid for it.

Some musicians might write non-fiction autobiographies about their experiences in various bands, but Portman’s writing allows him to continue building on the youthful energy and that sly, I-know-something-you-don’t-attitude conveyed in his music.

“Tom Henderson, who’s the narrator of King Dork, is essentially the narrator from a substantial chunk of those songs. The intention of the songwriting and the intention of the novel writing is basically the same thing, although a collection of songs is way different than a novel. But I’d say it continues in a less loud and snowy form.”

When asked if he has any regrets about MTX, Portman seems unsure at first. He wonders if there’s unfinished business with the band, or whether there was a way the band could’ve become bigger. Listen to a song like “Naomi” off the album Alecetrax, and you’ll see what he’s talking about. But ultimately, Portman concludes he’s completely happy with where he is now.

“Personally, whatever I was doing for the last 20 years sparked my literary career, at least I hope it turns into a prolonged career. That’s what I’m trying to do now. If you want to describe it as a legacy, the legacy continues.”

Do it yourself, punk

With all this talk of legacy, starting families and new careers, you might get the impression the scene is completely dead and gone. However, it’s kind of hard to say that when one of the first of the major Ramones-core bands is still alive in all its minimalist glory.

Joe King of the Queers is one of the last of his kind. The free-spoken, at times politically incorrect, punk rocker got hitched last year and lives in Atlanta. He’s on the way home from the mechanic along with his wife, who is driving the other car. When he gets home, he fires up the grill on a mild January evening.

King, a New Hampshire native, doesn’t hide his glee.

“It’s great for me,” King says. “I’m a Boston boy, so it’s exciting for me to be able to cook steaks out on the grill in January. It’s pretty nice out tonight.”

But, don’t let this little snippet fool you. Even at 49, King writes new material, records music and travels the world full time, something he’s done since 1990.

“I got married, but I’m not settling down too much — much to the chagrin of my wife,” King jokes. “We’ve been touring so much lately that it’s horrible for a home life. It’s how I make money, so I gotta do it.”

Fortunately for King, he doesn’t have to hit the road again until May. In the past three years, according to the singer-songwriter, the longest break he’s taken is seven weeks. It may sound like a lot at first, but consider the fact he is constantly away from home.

“It drives you crazy when you gotta go back out on the road, and you don’t just work around the corner and come home and see your old lady,” King says.

When you’re not in Green Day and selling millions of records, a punk rocker has to earn a living somehow.

Speaking of Green Day, it also emerged from the same label — Lookout! Records — the Queers and other Ramones-core bands called home. Although the Queers predated Green Day, King gives the band a lot of credit for what he’s doing now.

“It was a weird, weird thing for this band from New Hampshire,” King recounts. “I owned a restaurant, and I was going to do that for the rest of my life. I was happy, because that’s creative in its way, too. Then all of the sudden, that whole Green Day thing took off. I did one tour with Screeching Weasel, one with Rancid, and we’re like, ‘Fuck this, man.’ Got a royalty check. I think it was for $700, and that was just for me. The other guys got almost as much, and we’re like, ‘Holy shit, are you kidding me?’”

The Queers has changed its lineup numerous times since, but King’s drive to maintain a career — a word he hates to use — in music is what has kept it going for all these years. After the band, he says he’d like to start a studio and produce other bands so he’d still be “around that good energy.”

Although the Queers’ formula includes — but is not limited to — catchy hooks and bubblegum-themed lyrics, King may be the best example of a do-it-yourself punk rocker. He’s refused to play the Vans Warped Tour, saying he doesn’t like the rock-star atmosphere, or a lot of the bands for that matter. To him, most of them were simply jocks raised on heavy metal. While a number of punk bands gained recognition from the tour during the late ’90s and early ‘00s, King remained true to his ideals.

“At this point, I’m not trying to make it in the business,” King says. “I’m just trying to have fun. That’s what gets me out of bed in the morning. We’re not the big punk rock band on the block anymore, but I got to do a lot of stuff I set out to do. I still want to do another album, and when it gets old, I’ll just stop. We got a little corner of the world, and so I’m happy for what we have.”

Who says punk rockers can’t be happy and content?

The sound of inevitability

In the overall picture, the Queers is an anomaly. Staples like Screeching Weasel are no longer together, and the Donnas changed its sound dramatically to acquire the audience it has today.

Kent State graduate Jason De Leon fronted a band called the Freakin’ Constitutions from 1996 to 2003. His brainy, punk-influenced outfit took a lot from the ’90s, Ramones-core scene, using that sound as a basis for a culmination of other influences.

De Leon is a public relations coordinator for Columbus-based Economic and Community Development Institution, and he also freelances for the Kent-Ravenna Record Courier and other publications. Musically, he is in a band called Lyle Machine and the Brigade.

“It sure beats the hell out of sleeping on floors, living in a van all the time, which I’ve done, don’t get me wrong. But I can’t live like that forever.”
Shut up & rock

Our class had access to that type of music so some one that punk rock isn’t really necessary a style, but it’s a fans could buy CDs and other products from the one major way bands connected with their fans. It’s artist from that artist or it’s label, rather than hitting the Internets revo lutioniz ed it to the widespread. 

When De Leon speaks about the Mr. T Experience and other Ramones-core bands, he speaks not as someone part of that crowd, but rather as a musician who was inspired by it. “What drew us to it was the fact that not every kid in our class had access to that type of music influence,” De Leon says. “My definition through the years is that punk rock isn’t really necessarily a style, but it’s a phase of music everyone goes through.”

He explains another reason for the success of this music dealt with mail-order service, meaning fans could buy CDs and other products from the independent labels or the bands themselves. This is one major way bands connected with their fans. It’s much more personal to buy a CD of your favorite artist from that artist or its label, rather than hitting the local Wal-Mart. Once the Internet came around, De Leon says, the do-it-yourself appeal of the bands was lost. “I don’t think a lot of those small indie labels knew how to adapt,” De Leon says. “They talk today about what a big impact pirating music has on all these major labels, but the people it hit the hardest were the people that relied on mail catalogue service, relied on word-of-mouth promoting and just non-stop touring. I think for the artists on those labels, when they figured out they didn’t really have to do that anymore, it became less appealing. The Internet revolutionized it to the point where anyone could do it themselves.”

De Leon believes although the music is no longer bands has been to make money,” King says. “Why would you listen to some fucking moron punk rocker tell you who to vote for? Get on the fucking Internet. There’s a vast wealth of information out there and much better ways to become informed, and it ain’t goin’ to a fuckin’ punk rock show. I think it’s pompous and conceited to talk down to the audience.”

Pat Kim of the Beatnik Tertmites, a Libertarian supporting the war efforts, agrees with King, saying he listens to and makes music for its entertainment value.

“I don’t like when people tell me what to think,” Kim says. “I’m the kind of person to say, ‘Shut up and sing.’ I certainly have views, but I keep them to myself.”

Both King and Kim say they believe something like the Rock Against Bush series of CDs is a bandwagon waiting to be jumped on.

Even Kent State graduate Jason De Leon — formerly of the band The Freakin’ Convictions and now in Lyle Machine and the Brigade — who openly opposes the president, says he feels artists should exercise more restraint in this area.

“You have a message in your music, and it should be felt,” De Leon says. “It should be felt through the music alone.”

On the last Qukers album, King played a song that criticized President Bush, but politics are rare for the band.

“There’s good and bad about everything. It’s a weird time here in the states, but I like it over here personally, having toured around the world.”

— J.B.

Twenty years from now, I’ll be able to look back and say, ‘These people were just making music. They weren’t trying to be superstars.’"

what it was, it’s not completely gone. Not only will the Internet keep these bands alive, he says, but people like Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day will recall his big time and a fun time, but it was also an incredibly stressful time. From ’99 on when we did touring, I was married, my wife was there most of the time, it was difficult giving her time and attention that she needed while still making sure stuff was going right with the band. We never had management people or road people, We did everything.

Some people will always go back to a time in their lives when they could’ve made a difference — when they could’ve been something more than average. 

But Holt doesn’t think like that. To him, punk rock was something he was fortunate enough to be a part of for a while, and now he has moved on to the next phase of his life.

“I wouldn’t go back and redo it. It’s not a regret, and it’s not something I’d go back and do differently. I wouldn’t go back and have our trailer not get broken into and have that tour been a big huge success and had never had kids. I would never wish for that. I think everything that’s happened so far has been great, and I don’t think I’d change any of it.”

Here’s your final report. Like De Leon says, maybe it’s more a phase and less a lifestyle. The secret’s out, and, for many, so is punk rock.

B. Joe Shearer is a senior magazine journalism major. This is his second story for The Burr.
A Message from the President

Dear Students,

As Kent State concludes another successful semester, I want to thank you for your many contributions to the university’s growing, positive momentum — from winning prestigious scholarships to winning Golden Flash games; from serving as university ambassadors through your work as volunteers and interns, to serving as the conscience of our community by standing up against racism and other forms of intolerance.

A major focus of my presidency continues to be building an environment that supports the success of all students. That means providing you with high-quality academic programs and services; keeping our campuses safe; and working to make every member of our community feel welcome, included and respected. Kent State’s leadership team and I are working diligently on all these fronts. But when it comes to creating an environment in which all students feel free to express their views and to simply “be,” each of you has a critical role to play.

Most Kent State community members understand how valuable — and how wonderful — it is that our campuses comprise a rich diversity of people with a multitude of experiences, talents and beliefs. Yet I want to acknowledge the continuing need to use this understanding to become the best university we can be. I therefore ask you and the entire university community to join me in making a conscious effort to treat everyone with kindness at best and civility at the very least. And let’s support the rights of others in word and deed.

Knowing the caliber and character of our community — including an accomplished and caring student body — I look forward to significant progress in building a more welcoming and inclusive environment in the months ahead.

In the meantime, thanks again for your efforts to put excellence into meaningful action across the university. I wish you a very pleasant and highly productive summer.

Lester A. Lefton
President
One reporter experiences the party scene and is left feeling lost among his peers.

Reporting by Kevin Kolus // Photography by Dana Beveridge

It's a dreadfully humid August night, weeks before my 21st birthday. I'm sitting on a friend's deck at his home in Strongsville, watching the blonde in the pool and slaking my thirst with a St. Pauli Girl. The heat causes an almost instant beading of condensation on this green beer bottle, and for the past 10 minutes I've playfully crinkled the damp sticker with my thumbnail. I pause for a moment, absorbing the irony. Holding six mugs of the draft, gazing at me with her twinkling blue eyes, proudly displaying her cleavage above the waterline. When I look past the drink, I see standing in front of me a beautiful blonde with twinkling blue eyes, proudly displaying her cleavage above the waterline.

"Hi, my name's Alex."

"It's nice to meet you. My name is Kevin ... isn't it damn humid out here?"

Wait, that was a stupid thing to say. She's in a pool. I've never been any good at this. We stare at each other for a moment. Nothing comes out of my mouth, but I can't take my eyes away from her. She's tall, built well in her bronze bikini, and warrants the looks from every man she meets. I can feel a warm rush of blood streaming to my face as I tear the sticker off with a single skittish thrust, gumming glue up under my nail. I'll try and wipe it off on my...
pars, maybe act annoyed, and hope for her to swim away. I'm a commuter at Kent State who hasn't expe-
rienced a single party at that massive university, and I'm not doing too well in my friend's backyard. This
apprehension sends me trembling into embarrassment, and it was probably visible to everyone — a handful
of college guys in their late-teens who are drunk, waiting with fermented breath to pick me apart in front of this
... huntress. Unexpectedly, I hear Tim, the friend who lives here, as he runs up onto the deck, interrupting the
silence with his bright, if not enviably happy, voice. He asks me if I need a refill, but I turn him down and
keep a tight grip on Pauli. Or what's left of her.

This is Tim's first party and he's going to impress us. The thrill of underage drinking rouses the boys and
girls, complementing that underage detachment from responsibility. He wanted a pool party so we would
come together in the heat and undress. His friend's older brother bought alcohol so we could feel like
adults. And so the girls would be easier to talk to.

It's also the kind of summer night that lends itself to mischief. Adventure. Disaster. The premise for those
teen movies my peers can't seem to get enough of. And it is the night I find myself, where so many other
college students find themselves, in a time of need for that one universally human desire: advice.

Who are we kidding?

It's difficult for me to ask people for help. My whole life I've felt independent and strong. That's probably
why I always favored existentialist philosophers to the Greeks, being alone to being in a group, and staying
relatively calm compared to expressively wild. But I can't deny that I've wanted advice, and neither can
anyone else.

Newspapers and magazines have Q&As with an eager public for just about every issue. Family doc-
tors scrawl out prescriptions for anti-depressants as a daily routine. I can't leave out our role models, either.

Doesn't it seem like everyone in Hollywood has a therapist?

Then there are college students. I feel like we're missing something. According to the American Psychiatric Association, one out of four of us, the young adults, will have had at least one depressive episode by age 24. Many — almost half — of all college students become so depressed that they say functioning normally is difficult. Suicide has become the second leading cause of death for us.

Yet we look so happy on the outside. We are drinking Corona during our fiestas, dressing more exotically to show we've shed our inhibitions, passing up condoms for a lifestyle that serves to entertain. Sadness, it seems, has become the embarrassing epidemic not one of us wants to associate with.

Violence is another problem for us. Just look at Northern Illinois University or Virginia Tech to see
what can happen when mentally ill students snap. Yet, it doesn't feel like these horrors stay in our minds long
enough to make an impression. I'm always noticing sentiments like "I live life to the fullest" or "I'm only
about having a good time" advertised on everyone's Facebook page. Who, is lying? Not everyone can be
enjoying college.

We young people are without wisdom. College students are giving each other the wrong advice, I be-
lieve, and we are worse off because of it. So I ask a professional what the dilemma is with college students.
As I suspect, Gregory Eells, director of psychological services at Cornell University, whose research interests include general college mental health issues, doesn't agree with my theory.

"When you look at the ideology of depression, it really isn't correlated to advice," Eells says. "Perma-
nence creates depression. Losses. There are many things that can affect people negatively. Attempting to
give someone advice does not make them depressed. However, if they are getting messages that are supporting
the negativity, if there is any kind of advice that supports that kind of thinking, the depression cycle can
get much worse."

He is right. If we are feeling down, or just need help with any decision, negative advice can reinforce bad
feelings. I rarely see people act vicious for the purpose of derailing an already troubled individual, so that isn't
our problem.

I think back to the pool party again and wonder: What happens when we need help, but are too embar-
rassed to ask for it?

She moves swiftly

Earlier in the night, Tim was smashing the tops of beer bottles on the kitchen countertop, trying to get the
caps off. He couldn't find the bottle opener. I wonder what your parents will think when they see the chips
in the counter, you jackass. There's a hand-operated can opener next to the stove, so I pick it up and use
the hooked part on the bottom of it to open the next bottle. "What the hell?" Tim, a biomedical engineering
student at Case Western Reserve University, must have felt
dense. "I never knew what that was for."

I'm thinking about this and smile at everyone who is shirtless. Drunk. Having a good time. Acting young.
But how am I acting?

I came to a pool party wearing a long-sleeved shirt and jeans on one of the muggiest days of the year. I've
had one beer in a six-hour period. And I'm standing with my arms crossed as Alex puts her hand on my
shoulder.

"Hi...hi there." She's incredibly drunk.

"Are you having a good time?" Of course she is. A half dozen shirtless swimmers have been flirting with
her and handing her beers all night. She doesn't re-
spond. Instead, I feel her fingers slowly climbing the
ridges of my spine. It's an intoxicating feeling: the
hustress moves across the plain of my body, like a li-
ness chasing a gazelle. She's lethal, looking for the
weakest prey. To my right is a guy named Greg whom
I met earlier, giving me the "thumbs up" with his eye-
brows. I don't even know how that's possible. It must
be the way guys communicate. Small on words, big on
emphasis.

I can feel her staring at me, but I hold my eyes for-
ward. Arms crossed.

"Do you wanna go skinny dipping?"

"Yes."

"No. I don't think Tim would like that happening in his pool."

She doesn't look happy with that answer and slouch-
es on my shoulder with her elbow digging into my
neck. The alcohol has fattened my huntress. She looks
weary, and the pool water has turned her flowing blond
hair into a dirty mass of sticky braids. Next to my left
ear, breaths are deep and focused; her futile attempt to
quell the stirring nausea within. I feel concerned and
look at her, and she puts her arm around me. What am
I supposed to do next? The toast of the party is spill-
ing herself all over me, and I can only come up with a

Yet we look so happy on the outside. We are
drinking Corona during our fiestas, dressing more
exotically to show we've shed our inhibitions, passing
up condoms for a lifestyle that serves to entertain.

Sadness, it seems, has become the embarrassing
epidemic not one of us wants to associate with.
"Can I see your driver’s license?"
"I don’t have it yet."

This is why my moral compass spun like it was trapped in a magnetic field. Instinct!

There’s a pause. She knows I don’t believe her. Her hand moves down my chest, and she grabs at me, below my belt. I squirm away.

"What the hell is wrong with you? I barely know you and you are grabbing me there?"

The huntress is angry. Wounded. No trophy in the form of an older guy for her tonight. She’s just another high school girl looking to have a story to tell. Leaving me, she walks up to the guys playing the drinking game. I look at Greg long enough to see him shake his head at me before I hear the hol­

...ing going on. Alex has taken her top off and is moving her exposed breasts like pistons, much to the satisfaction of her admirers. Time stops for me. What have I done? This girl needed your help, and you pushed her away. Insulted her. I feel alone. Who do I talk to at this party about feelings of regret? They’d surely make fun of me if they found out my reason­

...ng. A nearly 21-year-old virgin, terrified of a high school girl. I leave the party a lesser man, consumed by feelings I was too afraid to explain.

The worst of it all

That night weighs me down like a soaking wet outfit. It taught me that parties have no standing room for an observer who’s offended by question­

...ibly immoral decisions. I can’t be the only one in my age group to have this realization, though. I need to know what Eells thinks.

The onset of mental illness like bipolar disorder, schizoaffective and major depression often occur in the early 20s, he says. But most college students have the luxury of free guidance counseling. The professional therapy is there for us, easy to obtain.

But therapy with one person you hardly know can’t be enough. Well, Eells, what should we do to keep therapy in our lives not only by appointment, but also as a common practice?

"You need to have social connection," Eells says. The power of having someone ask you for a cup of coffee or to go to a movie combats the feelings of depression. Not connecting with people, telling people to keep to themselves, saying, ‘Nobody feels that way,’ continues the cycle of depression. There are so many things that are just normal, developmental things, that it’s great to have another perspective. For instance, people like to talk about sex, because college may be the first time they’ve had sex. It’s things like that where college can be useful, to talk to people who are in the same developmental place. They have the same ques­

...ons you are struggling with."

Eells wants us to look for a variety of perspectives. Talking to our parents will net different advice than talking to the people currently experiencing the same dilemmas, but drawing on a broader pool will help us recognize where we stand. No one, regardless of age, can expect to succeed through these forms of therapy without acknowledging he or she has a problem, ac­

...cepting that it won’t go away and having the willing­

...ness to look for help, Eells says.

But why do we need to accept that we are helpless in order to get helped?

"The reality is you are much wiser if you don’t know some things," he emphasizes. "Nor can you when you are 18 or 20. And that’s true in all areas of life. If people are really honest with themselves, they will tell themselves they don’t know the answer to these questions, and accept that they need advice."

All right. I know I have a problem, and I know I need to talk to at least one person about it. How will I know what advice I should follow?

“Ask yourself, ‘Does this feel true to me? Does it fit with my experience?’” Eells suggests. “Sometimes we take advice because the person giving it is smart, or that tiny voice inside says, ‘That sounds OK,’ but it really doesn’t. I think internally we all have a sense of what is the best advice. If students don’t take that time to reflect, it’s hard to know what that good advice is.”

Maybe that is what’s been missing for me. For all of us.

A time to reflect

I talk to three people that night on the way home from the party. First, I call Tim. He’s wasted.

"I think you should go for it. She is underage, but it’s your call. You have your own risk to take."

What he says doesn’t sit well. I didn’t hesitate be­

...cause I was afraid of going to jail. It’s because she was drunk and easy to take advantage of. It seemed morally wrong. Then there’s that small matter of being petrified of her.

Next, I call Ian, a fellow Kent State student. He’s

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 skill in communication 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 in 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.
The Honors College

Discover Our Commitment to Excellence

Visit our Website
www.kent.edu/honors

Stephen Johnson Complex
330.672.2312

Email questions to:
honors@kent.edu

The low-down on campus counseling

he office of Counseling and Human Development Services at Kent State offers free guidance to students, faculty and staff. Gregory Eells, director of psychological services at Cornell University, says it's best to take advantage of this therapy while it's free.

"Getting that help and care while you are in college is the better way than waiting until you are 24 and dealing with the American health system," Eells says.

The way a college student should go about seeking help, he says, is to have a good attitude going in, trusting that therapy can help. Also, don't walk into therapy looking for the answers as a quick fix. A therapist is not going to spell out your antidote. "Part of growing up is the experience and learning for yourself," Eells says. "So when it comes to advice, be careful about that part of yourself that is looking for an easy answer."

John West, interim director of Adult, Counseling, Health and Vocational Education at Kent State, and a former counselor himself, agrees with Eells that therapy must be a relationship with two active participants. If a college student is going to get useful advice, he or she must first have interest in making progress.

"I think many of the theories would say it isn't the counselor's job to give people advice," West says. "It's an opportunity for someone to come in and explore an issue with someone else that is somewhat pressing for them in their life. It's often times more of a collaborative relationship."

West says college students do not need advice more than any other age group. Instead, getting the free counseling when they are young seems like a good springboard into a more positive future.

"I would suppose a person between 19 and 24 certainly could have an important decision they need in their life," West says. "It seems like in anyone's life that none of those phases go smoothly. Sometimes it can be helpful to have someone to open some space with so you can think how you want to proceed in life."

— K. K.

B. Kevin Kolus is a senior magazine journalism major. This is his first story for The Burr.
Waiting for the Invite

Confessions of a commuter student

Commentary by Joe Shearer

We sealed the deal in early December. That is, after about a year of dating, my girlfriend and I finally called it quits.

Some would say it’d be easier and a lot less messy to wait until after Christmas when everyone could comfortably exchange gifts and families could smile and believe everything was all right. But then you have all that “living a lie” crap, and yada, yada, yada ... whatever.

Truth is, we were in a long-distance relationship. No, not the kind you’re thinking. She lives on campus, while I have about an hour haul from Medina. Although we’re from the same town and go to the same school, the distance between us was immeasurable.

While I worked full time and had a full course load, she’d sit in her dorm after classes watching everyone around her having a good time. When we finally did hang out, I was tired and only wanted to see her. I was like a little boy who caught a butterfly in a glass jar, wanting her all for myself, not realizing I was smothering her in the process. She grew more and more distant, and although I was ultimately the one who ended it, she had escaped me months before.

It’s not easy being a commuter student. Clubs, organizations, meetings, parties. Hell, even viewing the endless amounts of photo albums on Facebook ... it feels like one big party, and I wasn’t invited.

Sure, it’s a dream being 23 years old, not paying rent and mooching off your parents for food. But when you’re trying to get something more from campus than an education ...

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. All work and no play ... oh, sorry.

Turns out, I’m technically in the majority. According to Kent State’s 2008 fact book, 11,780 students commuted to campus, as opposed to 6,310 who lived on campus in 2007. Of course, a “commuter” can be any one of thousands of people living in Portage (non-residential students), Summit or Stark counties.

At about the same time as all that other drama, I had to make another difficult decision.

I’d finished my first semester writing for the entertainment section of the Daily Kent Stater, and both of my editors recommended I edit the section this semester. That was kind of them. The pay was better, but more importantly, it couldn’t hurt my chances of getting a better internship.

Again and again, I went over it in my mind: Could I balance working a minimum of 32 hours a week at Borders to get benefits, take 16 credit hours of classes and still manage to be an editor?

It’d be interesting. I’d be like one of those red-helmeted Japanese guys in that game show “MXC.” Except when I tried running uphill and someone chucked a giant boulder at my head, who knows if I’d get back up again.

As for the rest of my fellow trigger-itchin’ commuting classmates, sometimes you just need to laugh at yourself to stay sane.

A musician I once interviewed said this is the line she lives by while touring: When life gives you lemons, squeeze them until the juice runs down your legs.

Sure, it’s a drag when professors automatically assume the whole class has extra time to hang around the library. Like I don’t have to work at 8 a.m. the next day. But sometimes, those outside-of-class activities make for fun stories.

The day before Valentine’s Day last year, I was supposed to cover this stand-up comedy event. In addition to almost getting my mom’s Honda Accord stuck multiple times in blizzard-like conditions
that night, I remember having to run like an idiot in more than a foot of snow from the Music and Speech C-Lot to the Student Center because I thought I was late.

Another time, my editor called me in to the newsroom to write up a brief I could’ve done at home and e-mailed to her. At the time, she had no idea I was a commuter. Now, she feels really bad about it, which makes me feel a little better about the whole thing.

Distance isn’t the only disadvantage of being a commuter.

After the breakup, my ex-girlfriend immediately started showing interest in another guy. So, what did I do? Go after a girl completely out of my league, naturally. It was mostly in the name of good, old-fashioned revenge, of course, except it blew up in my face when I fell for her.

She was this hip, modern party girl who had lots of friends and did the whole fashion shebang. I started to like her, and by the third time we hung out, we held hands. I was so proud.

"Held hands?" asks my friend on AIM a few days later. "Dude, she’s a college girl," insinuating all college girls want to drop their pants after the second or third date.

What did I know about college dating? I felt like 15-year-old Max Fischer must have felt in the movie Rushmore when he’s trying to work his best friend’s hot mom one day after school.

“So, how’d it go with Mrs. Calloway?” asks one of the other boys.

“We shook hands,” Max says coolly.

“Big deal,” he retorts, then references the school bully. “Buchan said he’d already banged her by now."

To a certain extent, my friend was right. Nothing came of the other girl. I didn’t and still don’t know the first thing about college other than the learning experience. With only one semester remaining, I guess I’ll never really get it. You people, your parties and your cliques are all completely foreign to me.

Since the beginning of the semester, my ex and I stumbled back into each other trying to work things out. I want her to give me more attention, while she wants me to be less of a recluse. I mingled with a couple of her friends the other night. That seemed to make her happy. Baby steps, you know?

Why be a victim of the situation when you can squeeze the hell out of those lemons?

B. Joe Shearer is a senior magazine journalism major. This is his third story for The Burr.
Big bucks in the blood stream
I looked over at the ATM where a policeman stood, carefully watching over the day’s hodgepodge of customers: students and dropouts, people who need a tank of gas, people with mouthfuls of decaying teeth.

I never felt more vulnerable than when I walked into Akron’s ZLB Plasma for the first time. All eyes on me — I stood at the reception desk for new donors and knew I was immediately labeled as a newbie.

At this point, a part of me was heavily considering making a mad dash out the door, but one thought kept me going: I’m helping people live.

ZLB is a company that regularly advertises to college students in the Daily Kent Stater, urging us to donate our plasma. A group of students who saw these ads were curious enough to donate. They then made a small living from it.

Steve Johnson, a fourth-year junior nursing major, is my roommate’s brother. In one of our visits to his house last year, a house that is most obviously inhabited by too many men, I learned he and four of his roommates would make extra cash by donating their plasma. At a place that even he, admittedly, wouldn’t want to bring his own sister to.

At the time, all four of his donating roommates were rethinking their regular trips to Akron ZLB. Johnson’s old roommate Craig Young, a senior business management major, was the first of the five to start donating plasma but hasn’t gone back in over a year.

“I started donating in 2006 and quit as of January 2007 because I got a real job,” says Young who now works at Luna’s in Kent. “But the whole time I went and donated, I was unemployed and went twice a week every week ... making $60.”

Today, Johnson is the only one out of the group of old roommates who still tries to donate regularly.

“The only thing I could see that would make me stop going is once I’m out of school and making decent money and not so strapped with bills because I’m only working part time right now,” Johnson says.

Working as a hose manufacturer at TCH Industries in Twinsburg, Johnson still likes to have the extra cash that ZLB supplies him with for going out on the weekends, recreational use and to help save up for trips. His most current petty cash venture is for a new calculator for his business classes. His Walgreen’s desktop instrument isn’t cutting it.

---

Donating plasma offers the opportunity to make money and save lives. But do the dangers outweigh the positives?

Reporting by Jenna Gerling
Did you know: PLASMA 101

- Plasma is just the start of what students are selling for some quick cash. California Cryobank, one of the United States’ largest sperm donation laboratories, reports that 90 percent of its donations come from college students. There has also been a surge in college-aged women donating their eggs, which can sell for anywhere between $4,000 to $10,000. College students have become coveted and common donors because they are young, educated and strapped for cash. The Cryobank even boasts that “donors are recruited from exceptional institutions including The University of Southern California, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Stanford University, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).”

- Although plasma is 90 percent water, it makes up 55 percent of blood volume.

- Blood or plasma that comes from people who have been paid for it cannot be used for human transfusions. Federal regulations state that hospitals can only use blood that is labeled “volunteer.”

- The American Red Cross started taking plasma donations in 1941 to collect for the U.S. armed forces.

- The average liver transplant patient needs approximately 25 units of fresh, frozen plasma.

Sources: California Cryobank; AskStudent; Egg Donation, Inc., America’s Blood Centers, American Red Cross, University of Iowa Blood Center

I’m not sure any of them knew just what they were doing. They mostly looked at plasma donation and saw easy money. But really, plasma is extremely valuable. It has a long list of benefits: helping treat burn victims and patients suffering from life-threatening conditions like hemophilia and other blood disorders, lung and liver failure, shock or trauma, immune deficiencies.

Plasma also has a number of vital functions in bleeding and infection control, containing proteins and antibodies that fight diseases.

Your blood is made up of a liquid portion and a cellular portion. The cellular portion contains white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets; the liquid portion is your plasma. Once your blood is extracted during a donation, it fills a chamber in a machine, spins and separates, returns the cellular portion to the donor and keeps the plasma.

Technicities aside, that’s a lot of help for just a little bit of donors’ time, and ZLB donation centers from around the country are aiding in that process.

Waiting is the worst part of donating. This process can take anywhere from two hours on a good day to up to six hours — and that’s before you’re even ready to donate. Once you get to your chair, the amount of time the needle is actually in your arm, if you’re a quick donor, is 45 minutes.

Hours add up because each time you donate, you wait to go into the medical screening rooms where they record your weight, blood pressure and the iron count in your blood. And if it’s your first time donating, you are required to take a physical. Then you wait in another room for a chair to open up in one of their bays.

ZLB managers know this. That’s why they give money as a means of incentive and why they have a policy for new donors that puts you ahead of everyone else in line so your wait is shorter.

You can make up to $60 for donating twice per week, depending on how much you weigh — because the more you weigh, the more you can give. The first weight class is 110-149 pounds where you get $20 the first donation and $25 the second. The second weight class is 150-174 with $25 the first time and $30 the second. Last is for people weighing 174-400 pounds which gives you $25 the first and $35 the second. New donors can make $80 total for their first two donations as an added incentive.

Johnson says you only need to wait one day between donations, but the center allows you to donate only twice a week.

Ignoring the sideways and blatant stares, I try to stay cool and keep to myself as I stand uncomfortably in the middle of the waiting room — awaiting the chance to jump at a vacant seat.

To pass the time, I start to pick up on people’s conversations around me. Here’s what I learn:

- Don’t eat red meat or greasy, fried foods the night before. The fat from the foods you eat slows down your donation — and believe me, you really don’t want to have the needle in your arm much longer than the 45 minutes it already takes. Instead, eat fish or chicken.

- Hydrate. Drink plenty of water the day before (and even right up to) your donation. If you are a new donor, you are required to take a physical where you give a urine sample. They will know if they haven’t had enough fluids and won’t let you donate until you’ve had enough water.

- Holidays and the first of the month are times when ZLB is really congested because people need the extra cash to pay their bills.

On one of Johnson and Young’s frequent visits, one man in particular stood out to them.

Elaborately, Young begins with, “I met a lot of interesting people there.”

Young entered a bay and sat by someone flipping through DVDs with his good arm.

“I got Stomp the Yard,” the man announces, advertising his bootleg movies to anyone who would listen.

He continues sorting through his book bag full of merchandise as he pumps his arm, slowly adding to his donation.

Johnson encounters the same man while checking out at ZLB’s ATM, where donors are compensated.

“This guy was standing there, ‘DVDs man, I got some cheap DVDs here,’” he recalls. “I was confused. I didn’t know if he was talking to me because he was trying to talk under his breath.”

After I complete my initial screening and my physical, I am promised it wouldn’t take much longer until I could actually begin my donation. I was anxious as it was, waiting for nearly two hours already. I look around at people who have been waiting twice as long as I have and decide to stop complaining.

I stand there uncomfortably as my stomach flips in anticipation, waiting to enter my assigned bay, when a man with sagging jeans and short-cropped hair looks at me suspiciously and asks if it was my first time at ZLB.

“Am I that obvious?” I reply.

“Pretty much,” says the man, whose name was Rip. My conversation is interrupted: Finally, my name. “Jenna, bay two!”, an exasperated woman calls out.

I turn the corner and peer through the glass windows. They all lay there, lined up like beached whales, reclined on their S-shaped couches.

Bustling about are phlebotomists (those who are trained in drawing blood and plasma), clad in plastic facemasks and long white coats with worn nametags. In my bay was Justin — my saint and savior of ZLB. As I hoist my legs over the dingy couch and nervously cling to my belongings, he explains the donation process. But mostly, we talk about vegetables. He is friendly and more than willing to answer any question I have. He keeps my mind off of the needle and the large empty tube by talking about how he enjoys beefsteak tomato sandwiches and beets.

I begin to feel more comfortable after finally making it to my destination, so to speak. Listening to Justin was like some sort of offbeat mantra that made my rigid inner and outer disposition loosen a bit.

Justin gives me a wad of paper towels and tells me to squeeze my hand into a fist and flex every few seconds to pump the blood out. I watch as my blood turns through the plastic tubes that run into the machine. It enters a chamber that acts as a centrifuge where the separated plasma exits through another tube and slowly fills up my collection container.

After a few minutes, my machine makes “tock” noises as it completes its cycle — the first of several. I know to relax my arm and allow the mixture of returned blood and anticoagulant to run into my vein. The foreign fluid turns its color in the tube from a deep scarlet into a bright strawberry red.

Glancing at my container a short while later, Justin tells me I am in a surprised way I should be done in no time. Forty-five minutes at most. But this isn’t a shock for me: I always donate fast.
Steven Johnson, a fourth-year junior nursing major, stands outside of ZLB Plasma in Akron, the place where he frequently donates his plasma to make some extra cash. Johnson makes up to $60 by donating twice a week. — Photography by Elizabeth Myers

The only thing I could see that would make me stop going is once I’m out of school and making decent money and not so strapped with bills because I’m only working part time right now.”

I begin to fantasize about whom I might be helping with my plasma. I’ve donated blood many times before, but somehow donating my plasma made me feel ... good.

After my visit to Akron ZLB, no employees would be interviewed, but instead had me talk to their corporate headquarters.

Christine Kuhinka, manager at corporate communications of CSL Behring (ZLB is a subsidiary of CSL), says there are four different therapeutic areas of life-saving products that are produced from plasma.

- Coagulation disorders: If a hemophilia doesn’t receive the necessary product, he or she could bleed to death.
- Critical care and wound healing: This is for people who end up in the emergency room and may be bleeding to death. It encourages faster healing.
- Immunology: Some disorders involved in this category are primary immune deficiency. This disorder leaves part of the body’s immune system missing or not functioning properly.

- Pulmonary disorders: People with genetic emphysema benefit from a product called an alpha-1 proteinase inhibitor, which is designed to treat patients so they can breathe.

“If we didn’t have individuals who donated plasma, we couldn’t produce these products,” Kuhinka says. “Donors should feel really good about what they’re doing because they’re saving lives — they’re indirectly saving lives.”

“Did someone open a door?” I ask with chattering teeth. I tremble underneath my down coat, which is draped over me like a cape, when a woman across from me appears from under her Steelers jacket and says, “That’s just the fluids they’re putting back into you. It won’t last much longer.”

I shiver as I watch a new man fill the empty chair next to me. He comes into the bay, laughing and nodding at someone he knew across from him. The difference between me, the newbie, and the regular is amazing. Regulars know all the staff by name and, when they enter, shake hands and hug other regular donors. They make friends with everyone: reception, the people who take your pulse and weight, the people in the bays and even the policeman on duty. Regulars like the man next to me, Joe, requests that Cheryl, a phlebotomist, “stick him” with the needle because she never misses — unlike one of his last visits with a newer employee.

Slowly, the people in my bay fill their containers and empty their seats. I carefully watch them, learning from them. And when it is finally my time 50 minutes later, I know to raise my arm while pressing a thick stack of gauze to the wound while making a fist, clotting the hole and stopping the flow of blood. I put my sweater and coat back on, careful not to disrupt the wound.

As I am leaving, Rip joins my bay, and I wish him good luck. He nods at me and lays down.

Before I leave, I make sure to take my receipt to ZLB’s ATM where I type in my birthdate and a short code. In exchange, I pocket $40 for my time and a sense of satisfaction that plasma that had just been in my body could help save someone else’s.

B. Jenna Gerling is a senior magazine journalism major. This is her second story for The Burr.
"I get to buzz you all," Emily Adgate says to a group of her friends who traveled to her boyfriend's house in Warren to willingly shave their heads. "I have cancer. I can do what I want." The 21-year-old junior psychology major was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma in February. When chemotherapy caused her to lose her hair, a group of her friends, including her boyfriend and her father (above), decided to have a head shaving party in support.
Congratulations to the Burr and CyBurr Staff!

NATIONAL AWARDS – 2007

Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Best Single Issue of an Ongoing Print Magazine: Editorial

The Burr, fall 2006, first place

Danielle Toth, editor; Jessica Lentine, art director

“The stories were engaging, the design was clean and modern, the writing was well-done and the cover itself was well-executed”

Judge: Ashley Deahl, managing editor of Phoenix magazine

Consumer Magazine Article: People

Brian Thornton, “Robbie’s Legacy,” spring 2007, honorable mention

Judge: Dick Stolley, senior editorial adviser at Time Inc. and founding managing editor of People

Consumer Magazine Article: Service and Information


Judge: Ken Collier, editor of Family Handyman, a Reader’s Digest publication

REGIONAL AWARDS – 2008

Society of Professional Journalists, Region 4

Best Affiliated Web Site

The CyBurr, spring and fall 2007, first place
Rick Salsberry & Adam Griffiths, webmasters
Elise Franco & Katie Alberti, web editors

Best Student Magazine

The Burr, second place
Jessica Lentine, editor, spring 2007
Jackie Mantey, editor, fall 2007

Best Magazine Non-Fiction Article

Elise Franco, “Attention on Adderall,” second place

Steven Bushong, “Remembering Scene One,” third place
Spring 2008

Hey There!
How are you? I’m missing you... I’d love for you to get to know me better.
Come check me out at theburr.com. Can’t wait to see you there!

POST CARD
This side for address

The Burr
231 Franklin Hall
Kent, OH 44242