BRAINCHILD
COMING APRIL 2014

A literary and arts publication dedicated to publishing the highest quality creative work of Honors students in the Mid-East Honors Region.

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THE ISSUE

THE FINAL MEASURE
KENT STATE CUSTODIAL SERVICES EMPLOYEE AND ETHNOMUSICOCOLOGY DOCTORAL CANDIDATE WAH-CHIU LAI FIGHTS THE CLOCK TO COMPLETE HIS DISSERTATION WHILE HE MAINTAINS A GRUELING WORK SCHEDULE.

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL THINGS
Sophomore nutrition major Emily Plajer builds muscle and passion as she pursues a career as a bikini athlete.

UNBREAKABLE BOND
Photographer Leah Klafczynski joins Kent City Police Officer Dominic Poe and German Shepherd Iron for K-9 training in Wapakoneta, Ohio.

ENDING THEIR SILENCE
Three Holocaust liberators rehash their personal accounts of WWII—some of which are shared for the first time in half of a century.
PUTTING A HARD WORKING DOG LIKE IRON WITH DOM IS GOING TO BE HUGE FOR THE CITY AND ITS RESIDENTS. I WISH MORE PEOPLE COULD SEE WHAT THESE DOGS ARE CAPABLE OF WHEN THEY ARE PLACED WITH THE RIGHT OFFICER.”

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A NOTE FROM ALYSSA MORLACCI

This issue celebrates 100 years of The Burr.

Actually, it celebrates both the Chestnut Burr yearbook, founded in 1914, and The Burr magazine you now have in your hands.

Four years after the former Kent State Normal School was established in 1910, a group of students developed a yearbook under the leadership of its first editor-in-chief, Lena MacDonald. Nearly 70 years later, students Laura Buterbaugh and Thomas Lewis changed the publication into a magazine.

But the true mission of each hasn't been lost over the years. Yearbook or magazine, this publication is built by students for students to inform, entertain and document. Just as it did in 1914, The Burr serves as a record of what life is like for students at this campus: what's happening to them, what's important to them and how they want to be remembered.

Look into the past with century-old photos our staff collected and held up to campus locations today on page 24.

Once you've read up on our history at Kent State, turn to page 56, where Maddie Winer and Grace Murray speak with three holocaust liberators who live in the Cleveland area and finally open up about their accounts of World War II. On page 44, photographer Leah Klaufczynski takes us to a K-9 training camp with the Kent Police Department. Nick Shook explains to us the dangers of head injuries for athletes on any playing level through his personal accounts on page 20.

And, for our cover story, Carley Hull follows a sophomore nutrition major as she prepares for her fourth bikini athlete competition on page 39.

Thanks for picking up The Burr. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Alyssa Morlacci
Finding an apartment just got easier.

www.kentcribs.com
THE GOOD

1. Flash-A-Thon raises more than $22,000 for the Akron Children’s Hospital and trends on Twitter worldwide.

2. KSU student Jean Wilson Mutambuze and professor Jean Engohang-Ndong of the biological sciences department at the Tuscarawas campus have made promising strides in discovering a new antibiotic treatment for the Buruli Ulcer, a skin disease with documented cases in more than 30 countries.

3. Senior gymnastics team member Marie Case competes in the NCAA National Gymnastics Championships and places 13th in the All-Around.

4. Former Kent State freshman Quavaugntay Tyler is arrested in conjunction with the gunshot fired into the ground near Bowman Hall in the late evening of April 2. Though the incident itself is regrettable, perception of the campus and city police forces’ responses is overwhelmingly positive.

THE BAD

1. The committee responsible for selecting the university’s next president shreds its documents in an attempt to keep the search under wraps. While this protects the privacy of the candidates, students, faculty and donors have a right to know how their next leader was chosen.

Academy-Award-nominated documentarian Ken Burns, who has covered subjects ranging from the civil war to baseball, comes to Kent State April 22 as part of the Presidential Speaker Series.
Class is starting...

Where r u?

I’m so LOST!!!

FIND YOUR WAY TO CLASS AND GET THOSE ATTENDANCE POINTS.

Don’t just wander around campus all semester.
Download the KentWired App for an interactive map of KSU’s campus.
VENTURE BEYOND YOUR STANDARD LATTE

WORDS BY CARLEY HULL
PHOTO BY ANDRE FORREST

A specialty drink at any coffee house is a staple in the hands of the sleep-deprived college student, but your daily dose of caffeine doesn’t have to be on the menu. Baristas, from Starbucks to Tree City, are crafting new drinks behind the counter that you, too, can try.

These drinks can be ordered at any coffee shop, but the golden rule of off-menu ordering is to never simply order by name. Learn what's inside the drink, and order by ingredient.

WHITE LIGHTNING
Need to stay up for the next eight hours? The white lightning is your off-menu solution to a late-night cram session. It's basically cold, liquid energy poured over ice with an overwhelming white mocha flavor.

What's inside:
- ice
- three to four pumps of white mocha
- three to four shots of espresso

To order: “Can I have a large with four pumps of white mocha and four shots of espresso over ice?”

DALAI LLAMA
If you love a good chai latte, this is a great new take. Local Starbucks legend has it that one of its very own baristas crafted this drink, and you can ask for it by name at the Kent location.

What's inside:
- chai latte mix
- soy milk
- two pumps of vanilla syrup
- one shot of espresso

To order: “Can I have a medium chai latte with soy, no water, two pumps of vanilla and a shot of espresso?”

THE COLD BUSTER
Whether you’re battling a cold or a hangover, this mix of chamomile and mint tea is a clever way to clear your head and your sinuses. All you need to do is steep the tea bags together and add honey. Drink it steaming hot to get the full effect.

What’s inside:
- peppermint tea
- chamomile tea
- half cup hot water
- half cup steamed lemonade
- honey (add at the bar where you get your cream and sugar)
- pump of peppermint (only if you really need it)

To order: “Can I have a large hot tea with half steamed lemonade and a pump of peppermint? I’ll take a bag of chamomile and mint tea.”

BANANA SPLIT FRAPPE
Who said a coffee house can’t be a dessert destination? With a variation of flavored syrups to choose from, this dairy treat can instantly turn into a Frappuccino. Take your banana split to go with this blended treat.

What's inside:
- strawberries and créme Frappuccino (at Starbucks) or strawberry smoothie with milk
- vanilla syrup
- whole or half banana
- chocolate chips
- top with whipped cream
- mocha and/or caramel drizzle on top

To order: “Can I have a medium strawberries and créme Frappuccino with a banana blended in, a pump of vanilla, chocolate chips and topped with whipped cream and mocha drizzle?”
A FAMILY AFFAIR:

FOOT THE BILL NEXT TIME YOUR PARENTS VISIT AT ONE OF THESE STUDENT BUDGET-FRIENDLY VENUES.

WORDS BY HILARY CRISAN
PHOTOS BY SAMANTHA PLACE

1. WILD GOATS CAFE

Paintings of UFOs beaming sausage and eggs decorate the walls at Wild Goats Cafe on West Main Street. Inventive breakfast items, such as cheesecake French toast or a peanut butter, fruit and granola sandwiched between two pancakes, match its quirky decor. The menu isn't limited to breakfast concoctions; it also offers soup, sandwiches, and vegetarian options. These items are sure to entertain customers at a good price. The average entree costs $8 to $13, so students can treat their parents.

2. TACO TONTO'S

The locally owned Mexican restaurant is covered with works of art done by locals, brightly colored walls and rustic decorations. The menu features quesadillas, tacos, hand picked craft or Mexican beers (for those of age) and crispy burritos, which are pressed in a Panini machine, making outside shells crisp while the insides stay soft. Everything is made from scratch, with generous portion sizes and fairly cheap prices. Menu items range from $3 to $10.

3. BRICCO

For those willing to splurge, this fine Italian and Mediterranean cuisine restaurant has metallic decor, a private party room in the back and a classily dressed wait staff. Sophistication meets play with brightly colored walls, small, crafted decorations and other inserts of fun, such as the Bricco logo board made out of wine corks. The menu is for a mature palette and features foods like veal, goat cheese and balsamic vinegar drizzles. For the less daring, the menu also offers a selection of flatbread pizzas. Bricco showcases the upscale side of Kent, as some entrees cost more than $20.
4. FRANKLIN SQUARE DELI

For 38 years, the Franklin Square Deli has prepared deli sandwiches with fresh ingredients in front of its customers at Water and Main Street. Its menu is packed with 50 different sandwich options and promises to serve a wide variety of diets. The walls are covered with racecar mementos, and for naming all of the photographed drivers in frames on the walls, patrons are awarded T-shirts. For a full meal—sandwich, chips and a drink—customers usually spend about $10 each.

5. BAR 145

This gastro pub's specialty lies in crafting gourmet burgers made from quality meats, topped with cheeses and vegetables cropped from small, local farms. Bar 145, which was named after the degree used to cook its burgers, is known for its build-your-own-burger menu. The option allows customers to create their sandwich, picking from an unusual list of toppings, cheeses, breads and meats. Toppings can include sautéed cremini mushrooms, peach habanero chutney and duck confit. The location's servers all wear red Converse, and meals are served on white china. Bar 145 also hosts live music on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. Burgers cost an average of $10 and are paired with truffle fries with a side of roasted red pepper aioli.

6. THE PUFFERBELLY

The Pufferbelly, formerly the main railway depot in Kent, has an old-fashioned atmosphere. The dining area is spacious with a variety of decorations filling the walls, including an old carriage that hangs from the ceiling above a few tables. Located next to the train tracks and river, The Pufferbelly provides a scenic view with comforting atmosphere, filling food and a friendly waitstaff. Meals cost an average of $15 a person.

7. RAY'S PLACE

Since 1937, Ray's Place has been a key-stone in the downtown Kent restaurant scene. It's also a favorite of both students and alums. Ray's Place features huge portions, affordable prices and a beer selection that's almost unrivaled in Northeast Ohio. The Mo-Fo burger was even featured on the Food Network's "Best Thing I Ever Ate." The staff is laid back but knowledgeable, and the atmosphere hasn't changed since the restaurant's beginnings. The booths are covered with countless works of graffiti. Burgers range from around $5 to $10, while the beer prices range widely, depending on how rare of a brew you want.
HBO'S "TRUE DETECTIVE" MAY BE A SHOW ABOUT TWO MEN TRYING TO STOP AN EPIDEMIC OF CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE GENDER.

Disclaimer: The following contains spoilers for the first season of "True Detective."
n the end, most fiction is about one thing: the struggle between good and evil. HBO's "True Detective," which recently concluded its first season to nearly universal acclaim from critics and fans alike, is no exception.

Almost every piece of fiction makes a living by straddling the thin line between light and dark. They always have, and they always will. Like Rust Cohle (Matthew McConaughey) says while dragging on a cigarette between sips of Lone Star, "time is a flat circle." In his view, people will keep doing the same things they've always done.

The same could be said of fiction, but it doesn't have to be that way.

The first season of "True Detective" carves its niche at a strange intersection between hard-boiled crime, southern gothic atmosphere and Lovecraftian horror. Certain aspects of the show are borrowed from different genres. The overgrown Louisiana Bayou and its inhabitants come from one, while the crimes that they perpetrate come from a deeper, darker place. The two leads, with their on-the-surface good cop/bad cop dynamic wouldn't be out of place in a film noir, but it isn't only plot points and characters being pulled from other genres.

Many critics of "True Detective" have pointed out that there's another genre convention that the writers have borrowed from hard-boiled detective fiction and film noir: misogyny. There are only a few female characters on the show, and that's using the term "character" loosely. There's Martin Hart's (Woody Harrelson) wife Maggie (Michelle Monaghan), who nags him for much of the show, and rightfully so. There are Marty's mistresses, Lisa and Beth, who, from a narrative standpoint, exist to characterize his treatment of women.

In reality, they most likely exist to fill HBO's quota for exposed breasts, no matter what the genre or context.

That's the problem: most of the women on this show are treated like objects, either for sex or murder. Practically none of them have any control over what happens to them. Maggie is the only woman on the show who exercises any sort of power. Even so, the only real way she chooses to do so is through her sexuality. She either withholds it from Marty because of his infidelity, or uses it to punish him by sleeping with Rust.

It's easy to see how some critics would take issue with this aspect of the show. Emily Nussbaum, television critic for The New Yorker, wrote of Maggie that "she is the only prominent female character on the show," and she is "an utter nothing-burger, all fuming prettiness with zero insides."

Nussbaum is right, at least on the surface. There is no reason why, in 2014, we can't have strong female leads, or, at the very least, female characters who can act on desires of their own rather than being an object of male desires. Shows like "True Detective" have no reason to not have female characters with their own interior lives who are more than the sum of their exposed curves.

"THERE IS NO REASON WHY, IN 2014, WE CAN'T HAVE STRONG FEMALE LEADS, OR, AT THE VERY LEAST, FEMALE CHARACTERS WHO CAN ACT ON DESIRES OF THEIR OWN RATHER THAN BEING AN OBJECT OF MALE DESIRES."

MATT POLEN

However, it's not that simple. Like nearly every other aspect of "True Detective," there's something more going on beneath the surface. The show isn't just adopting the inherent misogyny of the noir genre the same way it would a mold for a hardened lead character. It's too smart for that. Instead, it's flipping it on its head.

As Erin Gloria Ryan of Jezebel writes, "...if we've reached the point in the flat circle of public fascination where we offer our gender criticism, this is a show that isn't just about what men do to women; it's about how men fail women."

Marty and Rust are complete wrecks, as far as protagonists go. They're failures. They're lying, alcoholic, fatally stubborn, unprofessional disasters. They're bad men, but that doesn't mean they can't do good things. As Rust puts it, "The world needs bad men. We keep other bad men from the door."

"True Detective" knows exactly how it's portraying women. As Slate's television critic Willa Paskin observes, "Ignoring women may be the show's blind spot, but it is also one of its major themes."

This is a show about a place and a time where and when women aren't just ignored, they're terrorized, raped and murdered. It's also a show about two men who, while they are certainly a part of that system responsible for these crimes, aren't shackled by it. They try to expose it and remedy it as much as two lone men can.

And they do—they save some women and children and take out a couple of bad guys, all while experiencing satisfying personal epiphanies about their emotional lives.

Therein lies the other, more subtle problem. In the end, these women—the child prostitutes, the rape and murder victims, the ignored daughters, the humiliated wives and mistresses—they are still objects. Instead of being solely victims of crime, they're now serving as a way for these two flawed men to grow emotionally. "True Detective" might know how it's portraying women, and it might disagree with it on principle, but that doesn't mean that it fully understands just what to do with them. The second season, when it comes, might remedy that problem. The show's creator, Nic Pizzolatto, posted and quickly deleted a tweet that had some fans to believe the show might feature some strong female characters, possibly as the titular detectives, in the coming season. It might be that "True Detective" throws audiences a curve, but viewers shouldn't hold their breath.

"True Detective" isn't the only show with a gender problem. Women only comprised 43 percent of speaking characters on prime-time television during 2012, according to the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University. Female characters were also mostly younger than their male counterparts—only 14 percent of female characters being older than 40. Women also comprised only 24 percent of content creators.

We still belong to a culture where we'd rather expose a woman's body than her ideas. Popular culture often reinforces this attitude, but it doesn't need to be that way. Time isn't as flat a circle as some might have us believe.
WE LOVE TO TELL STORIES

STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE

STORIES ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

STORIES ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT

THIS IS WHERE OUR STORY BEGINS

A STORY THAT IS truly portage county

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BRAINSCAPE – SMART FLASHCARDS

Studying on the go is what Brainscape is all about. The app allows users to create flash cards that are used to administer quizzes. According to the app’s description, “Brainscape spaces the repetition of each bite-sized concept based on exactly the right interval for your brain.” Users rate each card from one through five on how well they know the information. Brainscape then uses that information to determine the right time to quiz the user again. The cards can also be shared with someone else by using a web link. Through this feature, the user can manage others’ editing abilities and follow their study progress. Anyone with a computer, smartphone or tablet can use this app, which is available through the Apple App Store at no cost.

GEOGEBRA

GeoGebra is an international, award-winning, educator-created app that allows users to graph and solve problems of all difficulty levels. GeoGebra can do everything from plotting basic lines, to graphing polynomials, to solving high-level calculus equations. With a variety of viewing options, the user can see the problem in the form of an equation, graph or spreadsheet. The user can also allow the computer to solve the problem and show the steps taken to solve it. While the app can seem daunting at first, an in-depth, online tutorial along with instructional videos and multi-lingual support ensures that with the proper motivation anyone can use this product. With a wide array of options and award-winning software, GeoGebra is an all-purpose math machine that can help students prepare for anything from basic algebra to statistics and even calculus. GeoGebra is free in all app markets, and is a must for any serious mobile mathematician.

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Staying organized is key during finals week. iStudiez Lite allows users to manage one semester, five courses with 15 classes and exams per course, five instructors and two holiday breaks. Included is the ability to schedule and color-code your courses for better organization and fewer missed classes and assignments. For $2.99, users can upgrade to iStudiez Pro, which adds features like notifications for class and work, synchronization compatibility across Apple’s iOS including the Cloud and Calendar applications, multi-lingual support, a GPA tracker and an assignment reviewer among other things. Either app can be downloaded for free to an iPhone, iPad or Mac through the iTunes App Store or Mac App Store.

EASYBIB

This free app to download on the Google Play and iTunes Store makes the sometimes tedious task of creating a bibliography a breeze by allowing the user to search a database for the academic references cited in their work. From websites to newspapers and everywhere inbetween, Easybib has almost 60 categories of informational sources the user can search and cite. The user searches the work they’ve referenced, and Easybib does the rest. The app finds the information, properly formats it and integrates it into the user’s project. Easybib supports and integrates with Word, spreadsheets and Google docs. However, if the user wants to format in any style other than MLA, they will have to sign up for the monthly Pro service which ranges from $4.99 a month to $19.99 a year. Either way, Easybib is an excellent product to use in order to generate a bibliography with added features such as a research database and social connectivity.
IT'S HARD TO FOCUS DURING FINALS WEEK WHEN YOUR SCHEDULE IS BUSY AND YOU'RE HOPING TO PASS YOUR EXAMS, BUT PRACTICING YOGA CAN HELP TO RELAX YOUR MIND AND IMPROVE YOUR FOCUS.

WORDS BY SAMANTHA ICKES
PHOTOS BY ANDREA NOALL
ock music plays softly in the back­ground, so low it can barely be heard past the sound of one’s own breath. The only light present streams through the window from a street lamp and reflects off the warm, hardwood floor.

There is nothing to worry about other than the softness of breath and the directions of the instructor as she leads her students through a meditative exercise that will help them relax and focus on the task at hand.

“You are powerful, and you are peaceful,” the One Love Yoga boutique instructor says as her students raise their arms above their heads, breathing deeply. “Feel how completely awesome you are. Send some love back down to earth.”

Soft music and warm lighting evoke the calm and peaceful feeling students often omit from their lifestyles during finals week. Yet, Tim Huth, owner and director of One Love Yoga Boutique, says students should budget time for yoga because its “meditative quality” helps a person focus and “be in the moment.”

“Being in the moment instead of thinking what was or what's going to be—your head is clear to focus, even in class,” Huth says.

Huth, along with his wife and daughter, who graduated from Kent State’s fashion merchandising program in 2011, founded the boutique September 2013 in downtown Kent. It offers patrons classes in a heated yoga studio and sells earth-friendly apparel including yoga wear and all natural juice and smoothies at the in-store Robeks. The family chose Kent believing they could help students relax and focus.

“During times of stress, the mind races and tries to work overtime to get your to-do list done, to get your studying in, to get everything taken care of,” says Leslie Brooks, a yoga instructor at the Student Recreation and Wellness Center. “One of the benefits with yoga is it teaches the mind to slow down and take a break.”

It is important to schedule time to exercise and relax. Practicing yoga allows students to do both at the same time, and fitting in a class is easier than one might think.

“When you think about finals week, you’re scheduling out your studies, when your finals and actual tests are, we have over 80 group exercise classes each week, and that continues through finals week,” says Abby Millsaps, the marketing coordinator for the recreational services.

During times of stress, Brooks says the body doesn’t get the amount of oxygen it needs, but practicing yoga teaches students how to breathe properly. To demonstrate this method, Huth lay flat on his back with one hand on his stom-ach and the other on his chest.

Huth explains we normally breathe out of our chests. However, he says this creates more stress on the body. Huth breathes out of his chest, and then he breathes using his diaphragm, which he claims is the correct way to breathe.

“By breathing correctly, the body can acquire the amount of oxygen it needs. It can also help regulate and control emotions and moods. During times of stress, breathing can be shallow due to anxiety,” Huth says. “If you change the breath, it will change the emotion. Just think, ‘All right, I'm fine,’ and soften your breath, and all of a sudden you bring yourself to a calm place.”

Yoga has a variety of benefits emotionally, psychologically and physiologically. It brings awareness to the body and mind.

“It’s encouraging people to check in with themselves, not only what’s going on with their body, but what’s going on with their minds, whether they’re racing or feeling stress,” Brooks says.
POSE ON YOUR OWN

While taking time out of your schedule to exercise and relax is ideal, it’s understandable when you don’t have time to attend a basic yoga class, which is offered at the Student and Wellness Recreation Center from 7 to 8 a.m. on Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays. So, Huth describes several yoga positions that are simple, relaxing and doable in the comfort of your room.

April Huth begins a class with vinyasa yoga—a style that is concentrated on deep breathing.

**Child’s Pose:** Many yoga classes start in child's pose. It is a basic, relaxing, resting pose that can easily be done on your own. According to Yoga Journal, an online magazine that discusses the benefits of yoga and specific poses, this pose helps an individual breathe deeper and more efficiently to get the right blood-oxygen level. Child's pose also gently stretches the hips, thighs and ankles. It relieves back and neck pain as well as calms the brain to lessen both stress and fatigue. This pose is an excellent way to stretch after an hour or more of being bent over a computer studying.

First, sit on the ground with your legs under you, knees apart and toes touching. Your knees should be as wide apart as your hips. Drop your hands in front of you and rest your forehead on the ground. Then relax and slowly move your arms beside your feet, palms facing up. Stay in this pose for 30 to 60 seconds, breathing deeply.

**Mountain:** This pose is used to transition to after Mountain. It is a balancing pose that strengthens the thighs, calves, ankles and spine, according to Yoga Journal. To begin, start in the Mountain pose. Keep one leg firmly mounted on the ground while bringing the other leg either above or below your knee. You should align your foot against your thigh vertically and try to maintain your balance. Huth recommends focusing on one visual point in order to maintain your balance. Once you're stable, lift your arms above your head. They should be straight and parallel to one another. Hold this pose for 30 to 60 seconds.

**Tree:** Tree is an easy position to transition to after Mountain. It is a balancing pose that strengthens the thighs, calves, ankles and spine, according to Yoga Journal. To begin, start in the Mountain pose. Keep one leg firmly mounted on the ground while bringing the other leg either above or below your knee. You should align your foot against your thigh vertically and try to maintain your balance. Huth recommends focusing on one visual point in order to maintain your balance. Once you're stable, lift your arms above your head. They should be straight and parallel to one another. Hold this pose for 30 to 60 seconds.

**Chair:** Chair is a more difficult pose because it requires proper alignment. Huth says the pose strengthens posture and stretches the legs and back. To do this pose, first push your feet together and bend your knees. As you tuck your stomach in, raise your hands with your fingers apart. Your hands should be slightly angled toward one another with your pinkies almost touching. Soften your breath as you deepen your posture by lowering yourself slightly. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds.

**These four poses are simple enough to attempt in your dorm room.**

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2014
HEAD GAMES

A LOOK AT THE GROWING PROBLEM OF LIFELONG BRAIN DAMAGE TO ATHLETES ON ALL PLAYING LEVELS.

WORDS BY NICK SHOOK
ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA LANG
but as I focus on the five-man front on the projection screen, all I hear is ringing. Not consistent, high-pitched ringing in my ears. Not for why it happens, but I do have one clue: a memory of the first time I heard it.

we were practicing at the upper field, surrounded by boarded-up houses just on the edge of downtown. My helmet, a Riddell rounded by loose that day. I was performing as usual, until one practice, I thought at the time. My vision turned black, and then, an unbearably high-pitched ringing in my ears. Everything I saw turned to black, and then, an unbearable bright white. I missed the next couple days or so of practice before returning. I had suffered my first diagnosed concussion.

A full-night’s sleep and I aren’t very familiar with each other.

NyQuil might have me acquainted with the long-lost friend every once in a while, but most of the time, I wake up three or four times per night minimum. Each and every time, it is for absolutely no reason—no nightmare, no alarm, nothing.

Sometimes when I wake up, I get out of bed and get ready for the day, which my brain thinks has begun. I’ve gone so far as to enter the shower before realizing that it’s 2:30 a.m.

I try not to rely on medication or sleep aids. I tend to be nocturnal, bringing myself to near-exhaustion before forcing myself to bed in hopes of increasing my chances of a full-night’s sleep.

These struggles could be caused by my fast-paced, high-stress daily life. I have lost some hair since I started college.

However, I pin it on something deeper. Nowadays, talk about CTE dominates headlines, especially in sports. The acronym stands for chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a progressive degenerative disease of the brain found in, but not restricted to, athletes with a history of repetitive brain trauma. After experiencing seven concussions, I’ve only experienced symptoms like memory loss and occasional confusion. The disease has also been found to cause depression, anxiety, suicidality, Parkinsonism and progressive dementia.

“If you traumatize the brain, if neurons are lost or temporarily disengaged, we don’t know exactly how that happens,” says Robyn Joynes, assistant professor of psychology at Kent State. “Because, sometimes, it can be caused by strange things, such as blows to the head.”

According to Boston University’s CTE Center, a leading authority on the study of CTE, concussions are the primary cause of this disease, but research shows subconcussive hits to the head are also causes. The first examples of CTE were found in boxers in the 1920s.

Former NHL All-Pro linebacker Junior Seau, who enjoyed a successful and lengthy career, was never diagnosed with a concussion. Following Seau’s suicide, inflicted by a gunshot wound to the chest, questions arose about his cerebral health. The autopsy report stated that no apparent signs of brain damage were found, but the disease is similar to that of former NFL defensive back Dave Duerson, who suffered countless blows to the head after his death.

Seau’s family sent his brain tissue to the National Institutes of Health. The NIH kept the results private with respect to Seau’s family, but in January 2013, the Seaus released the institute’s findings, which reported that Seau’s brain showed “cellular changes consistent with CTE,” says Dr. Russell Lonser of The Ohio State University Department of Neurological Surgery, who led the study on Seau’s brain.

According to Boston University’s CTE Center website, repeated trauma to the brain “triggers progressive degeneration of the brain tissue, including the build-up of an abnormal protein called tau,” which is also found in the brains of Alzheimer’s patients.

One of the most disturbing facts associated with CTE is the onset of these symptoms, which can take months, years, even decades to appear after the last brain trauma, leaving the individual in an uncertain waiting game, not knowing if he or she does indeed have CTE, and when the symptoms may arise.

With the increased attention on brain health, former NFL All-Pro running back Tony Dorsett recently went public with his struggles with mood swings, memory and inability to sleep consistently—symptoms he believes are indicative of CTE. Dorsett played during an era of smashmouth football, when running backs were taught to lower their head and shoulders to deliver a crushing blow to an oncoming defender. Given the limited protection a helmet provided at that time—and still fails to provide—Dorsett suffered countless blows to the head, both concussive and subconcussive.

As a former football player who gave up the game for an overarching fear of further permanent brain damage brought on by a seventh concussion, I sympathize with Dorsett.

Just playing for 12 years, walking off the field for the last time at age 18, I too deal with some of the aforementioned symptoms. I often forget entire conversations that occurred just seconds prior. As a usually friendly, welcoming person, I experience dramatic mood swings that can last for hours, or full days at a time, with no true explanation other than I am angry about any and everything in the world.
I pin these issues not on fluctuating hormones—approaching my 22nd birthday, I've never been one to rapidly become emotional, maintaining an even-keel approach to everyday life—but instead on the aftermath of many blows to the head, both concussive and subconcussive. I played offensive line for most of my career and was taught to lead with my head and face mask, engaging defenders on a play-by-play basis with my helmet upon each snap, with my brain rattling inside my skull, but I think my first traumatic blow came before that hot day in August 2006.

I was knocked out by a fastball to the mouth when I was 13, but little attention was paid to my brain. More concern was placed on my loss of two teeth and sliced-open lip. I was also once nearly knocked out by a baseball bat. It split open my right eyebrow, which bled intensely. If I were looking for a silver lining, I thought these were normal experiences everyone goes through, but once I began talking with friends who have suffered concussions as well, I figured out the link. They described it to me before I even had a chance to explain it myself.

As research advances, we continue to learn more about the effects of CTE on athletes, and it is likely that non-athletes will soon join the group. The NFL spent decades covering up the risk that its players faced when stepping on the field to play America's most popular sport. But when the Boston University's CTE Center began its research in 2008, the NIH and the NFL flipped a 180, finally acknowledging the dangers of the game that brings in billions of dollars annually. The league now advocates safer tackling techniques that not only avoid targeting the head, but also mandate that players make contact with shoulders instead of helmets. But in a game that takes place at an incredibly high rate of speed, helmet-to-helmet contact and repeated blows to the head are essentially unavoidable.

CTE isn’t limited to football either. Former MLB outfielder Ryan Freel committed suicide by a gunshot wound to the chest, and his family donated his brain tissue for research. It was found that Freel, who was reported to have suffered from nine or 10 concussions during his career, had Stage II CTE at the time of his death, making him the first MLB player to have reportedly had the disease.

Longtime friends recall grade school or high school experiences with vivid details and laughs, expecting for me to join in, but I can’t because I don’t remember any of it. In fact, I remember little of high school, and even less of grade school.

Depth perception is an area of concern for me, too. Everything in the world through my eyes is somewhere between two- and three-dimensional. It’s almost like my brain is running on auto-pilot—like I’m not even really there sometimes. Then, on rare occasions, I get a breakthrough of focus (or whatever it really is), and the world is entirely real, how it used to be. The car I’m driving behind is really there in all of its 3-D glory.

Seconds later, the moment of focus is finished. I’m back in my two-and-a-half-dimensional world.

As research on brain trauma advances rather dramatically by the day, this leads me to think I might have experienced destructive impacts.

It may sound preposterous to those who follow the CTE issue closely, citing that most players are well into their 40s or 50s before displaying symptoms, but CTE issues aren't limited to retired professionals.

Seventeen-year-old high school football player Nathan Stiles died hours after his homecoming game in 2010 from second-impact syndrome—when a player is hit again after the brain has time to recover from an initial concussion. A later study of his brain revealed he had CTE, making him the youngest reported case of the disease.

As my memory issues and mood swings plague me every day. I forget to put peanut butter out of my kitchen cupboard, make a sandwich, put the peanut butter in the refrigerator and walk away, only to discover later that I never returned the bread. Then comes the frantic search for the peanut butter, which I eventually see in the fridge, where it isn’t supposed to be.

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This photo, taken in 1914, features the original editorial staff of the Chestnut Burr yearbook. At the far left is Lena MacDonald, the publication's first editor-in-chief.
During the fall semester of 1913, a group of students at Kent State Normal School sat on a blanket in what used to be a wooded area behind Lowry Hall. Somewhere on that blanket sat Lena MacDonald, her red hair most likely tied up in a bun. Her friends called her "Red" because her hair color was vibrant, and it nearly touched the ground, as her grandson, Dean Porr, who is now a professor in Kent State's business department, recalls.

Porr's grandmother graduated from the school in 1915 with a degree in domestic sciences, or home economics.

But before receiving her degree, MacDonald left her mark on Kent as the editor-in-chief of the school's first yearbook. In need of a name for the publication, MacDonald's staff was inspired by the burrs that stuck to their blanket. So, they titled the book "Chestnut Burr," which was compiled every year from 1914 to 1985 until two students reimagined the publication as a magazine and later shortened the title to "The Burr."

"People were much smaller 100 years ago," Porr says. "It's striking to think how small my grandmother was and that she was taller than people in the pictures. I'd say she wasn't taller than 5'2", 5'3", and look, she's significantly taller than the people around her."

As he flips through the old documents, tears well in his eyes as he's reminded of his family's generations that have come and gone at Kent State.

Looking through the pages of early editions of the Chestnut Burr, it's hard to visualize Kent as the place it is today. Instead of sidewalks, there were dirt roads, or wooden boards laid down between the buildings. Much of campus was open fields or woods, and the library was far from the tallest building in Portage County.

The faces were different, too. Students didn't smile for photos. They made yearbook photos look like a grave prospect. Most men were clean-shaven with angular jawlines, and the women wore bonnets, bows and ankle-length skirts.

Looking past the way people dressed a hundred years ago, there's a realization that the lives of college students weren't that different from how they are now. Students went to classes. They wrote papers. They ran for president and treasurer. They played football and baseball. They joined clubs, the debate team, the newspaper staff. And they put together a yearbook to document it all.

Here, we've expanded our routine section "Looking Back at The Chestnut Burr" to eight pages to accomplish a time lapse over the decades of the "Chestnut Burr" yearbook.
Kent State used to be farmland—literally. The school’s namesake, William S. Kent (son of Marvin Kent, the city’s namesake), donated 53 acres of farmland to serve as the Kent State Normal School’s campus. It almost didn’t happen that way, though.

There was a commission responsible for picking sites for the campus, and the various delegations had to make their case—parties from Wadsworth, Kent and Ravenna among them. It was so foggy that day the commission came to visit, that the proposed campus was barely visible. The commission members left quickly to tour a site in Ravenna. Things weren’t looking good for Kent.

Then Frank Merrill stepped in. Merrill offered up his home, located on the road to Ravenna, a hot meal and some hard cider to the commission. When the men finally arrived in Ravenna, four hours late and probably a little toasty, the tables had turned. Merrill became one of the first trustees of the Normal School, and the building that shares his name is not only one of the oldest on campus, but the first to be used for academic purposes. Were it not for Frank Merrill, it might still be a patch of grass.
CARTWRIGHT HALL
AUDITORIUM (1923)

Cartwright Hall, named after Kent State's first female president, Carol A. Cartwright, was formerly known as the Auditorium Building. It was home to the university library until 1927 and executive offices until 1976. In 1964, the auditorium began undergoing an extensive renovation to convert it into a lecture hall capable of seating 1,000 students—the largest of its kind on campus. Though it isn't what it once was, the stage was retained and is still used for larger performances and recitals.

TRAIN STATION (1951)

Before Kent was known as the Tree City, it was a railroad town. Founded in 1805 as Franklin Mills, the village didn't really make a big mark on any maps until future namesake Marvin Kent was able to arrange for the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad to be routed through the town. The depot served as an important stop for maintenance and repairs.

Founded in 1875, the depot was used as a waypoint between New York and St. Louis for those traveling along the A & G.W. railroad. The Kent Historical Society bought the building 100 years later and made renovations that cost more than half of a million dollars. The organization used the second floor to open the society's offices and museum. Below opened the Pufferbelly restaurant and bar. The society did, however, move from the second floor to a location on Water Street and then to 237 E. Main St. in the Clapp-Woodward house in 2011.

Kent was also home to another, less official mode of "railroad" travel. Franklin Mills was a stop on the Underground Railroad, where runaway slaves headed to Canada would stop at places like the Cuyahoga House or the Woodard Tavern on their way to freedom.

In placing emphasis on the importance of a journey, Kent became a destination.
The Vietnam War was a source of unrest and tension well before the shootings of May 4, 1970. Campus and the surrounding areas were the sites of numerous protests and demonstrations—some peaceful, others not.

Though student protests were initially centered only around the war, the administration's attempts to limit students' free speech created a high level of animosity between the student body and the university, which lead to further unrest.

One of the major players on campus was the organization Students for a Democratic Society, a group that frequently organized demonstrations of unrest ranging from sit-ins and walk-outs to the occupation of academic buildings. In April 1969, 60 students lead by the SDS were arrested for inciting to riot and breaking and entering. The group tried to occupy the Music and Speech building in an effort to disrupt a disciplinary hearing of two of their members.

It wasn't uncommon in those months and years to read front page headlines of the Daily Kent Stater about student arrests. But it wasn't always students protesting, and it wasn't always hostile. The above photo, taken in 1969 and published in the 1970 edition of the Chestnut Burr, features a peaceful march of students, faculty and citizens from campus to downtown Kent as part of a national movement to show support of a moratorium on the war.

This campus has a history of supporting free speech and democracy, and it's remarkable that a student body at an Ohio public university, so far from the corridors of power making decisions that affect the course of lives around the world, could have so profound an impact on the minds of the nation.
At the same time Kent was becoming a stop for crucial railways, the movers and shakers responsible for these decisions wanted Kent to be a cultured, educated city.

In 1892, due to the passing of an Ohio law that permitted cities of less than 5,000 citizens to levy taxes for a library, Kent became the first city in the state to fund its own public library. At first, the books and other materials were stored in the second floor of the train station, but that wasn't a permanent solution.

In 1903, the library got its own building. It was constructed in part with a donation from Andrew Carnegie of $11,500. It is known as the Kent Free Library.

The library on campus, though not the first in the state, is just as notable as its ancestor. The 12-story building that's known as the tallest in Portage County opened in 1970. Before that, the university library found its home in multiple locations. Until 1927 in was in Cartwright Hall, originally known as the Auditorium Building.

More than just a place for students to check out books and cram for exams at the last minute, the library houses a number of academic departments and resources dedicated to promoting literacy. It's also a landmark on campus. If you don't know where you are, just look up.
TRUE MEASURE OF OPTIONS OR POPULARITY CONTEST?

KENT STATE MIGHT HAVE BEEN VOTED THE SECOND FRIENDLIEST VEGAN CAMPUS IN THE U.S., BUT THE QUALITY OF THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS IS FAR FROM TOP-RATE.

WORDS BY KELSEY HUSNICK
When senior psychology major Jennifer Jones found out Kent State was in the running for Peta2's Favorite Vegan-Friendly College Contest, she wanted no part of it. The vegan of two years was so against Kent State winning the contest that she voted for a different school, even though she had never been there.

Peta2, a youth animal rights group and derivative of PETA, or People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, ranked Kent State second place in its contest March 31 after four rounds of voting. A mere 43 votes separated Kent State from the University of Florida, the winning school.

In Fall 2013, Peta2 started giving every public and private nonprofit college and university in the United States a "vegan report card" with a letter grade. The grades were determined from a survey sent out by Peta2 with 10 basic questions and room for additional comments by people submitting the survey about the school's vegan options. Information was also collected from schools' websites, according to Kenneth Montville, college campaign manager at Peta2. Kent State received an A on the report card and was then entered into the vegan-friendly college contest. Votes could be submitted by anyone with a valid email address, and no added information was required to elaborate on just how vegan-friendly the campus actually was—just click submit, and your school moved up the ranking.

Jones refused to vote for Kent State when asked by her employers in Dining Services to do so. Jones has worked...
‘Sure, I’ll vote,’ but they’re not educated on what they’re voting for.”

Jones is one of the many vegan students on campus who is unsatisfied with vegan options in the dining halls, despite Kent State’s recent standing in Peta2’s contest.

Sophomore political science major Allissa Lozano is a pescatarian (meaning she’s a vegetarian who also eats fish), but even she believes Kent State could use some more options for vegan and vegetarian students.

“It’s boring. There’s not a lot of diversity. It’s here, but it’s all the same,” she says.

“It’s kind of like, ‘What place do I want to get vegetables on break today?’”

Senior political science major Lindsay Wheeler became a vegan last June and agrees that the choices on campus are monotonous.

“Vegetables on bread there. Vegetables on rice there. Vegetables on bread there,” she says, pointing to different places around the Student Center.

All three women agree that Kent State has a lot of vegan choices available for students in the dining halls, but those options don’t change day-to-day and are the same wherever they go.

Freshman teaching English as a second language major Carolyn Reisdorff says, “I feel like everywhere on campus has a good variety of choices for vegetarians and vegans, and there’s always something we can eat, but at the same time, it’s not quite above-and-beyond.”

Reisdorff became a vegan five years ago and has been a vegetarian since age 12.

“There’s not enough quinoa and tofu for it to be the most vegan-friendly school,” she says.

But, Reisdorff also says Eastway has a great salad bar with a variety of options, and she, Wheeler and Lozano all agree that the Kent Market has amazing vegan soups. The girls can always find something to eat, and they usually have more than one option.

Wheeler says places like Einstein Bros. Bagels in the Student Center and pizza places around campus could do simple things such as offering non-dairy cheeses and cream cheese spreads, and vegan pizza. She also said the actual quality of vegetables served leaves a lot to be desired.

“One thing I’m really tired of is the super crappy quality of vegetables they have at this place,” she says. “I feel like every vegetable I consume in this place is impregnated with pesticides and genetically modified organisms! and hormones because they’re all so waxy and taste like plastic. I wish that they would get more locally grown and quality veggies.”

As far as Peta2’s vegan campus contest, Wheeler and Lonzano say they hadn’t voted in or even heard of the contest. Reisdorff had heard about it but didn’t vote.

“I saw stuff on Twitter that people wanted Kent to be No. 1, but I don’t really see it as being No. 1. It is really vegan friendly, but I don’t think it’s the best,” she says. “I feel like Kent honestly is really, really vegan friendly, and I have never had a problem when I was like, ‘There’s nothing to eat.’ I know one of my friends goes to Cleveland State University and she said there’s nothing. Their only vegan option is just a really poor salad bar.”

For Jones, it’s not the options in general that persuaded her to vote against Kent State—it’s the whole way vegan food is handled in campus dining halls.

“As someone who works in Dining Services, I know for a fact how little the people who work in Dining Services know about veganism,” Jones says. “They don’t know how to cook our food. If you’re a vegan you can not—with a capital N—can not eat
"Kent State is not that vegan friendly. Most of the votes have been acquired through the members of dining services going around with an iPad and asking employees to vote before they leave work. Most of the people voting probably don’t even know what vegan means."

JENNIFER JONES

at Rosie’s. Everything in Rosie’s touches meat, everything in Rosie’s touches cheese, everything in Rosie’s touches butter.”

Jones felt so strongly she posted on Peta2’s website, writing on Kent State’s report card page: “Kent State is not that vegan friendly. Most of the votes have been acquired through the members of dining services going around with an iPad and asking employees to vote before they leave work. Most of the people voting probably don’t even know what vegan means…”

While Jones admits that it’s not entirely Rosie’s fault, the “vegan” food cooked there loses its integrity because of how it’s handled. It’s completely unrealistic for the employees to wash cutting boards and equipment after every single wrap they make or burger that they cook when they are busy, but the fact of the matter is that a hummus wrap made on a surface contaminated with meat and other animal products is no longer a truly vegan option.

There is also a lack of attention and education surrounding handling vegan food in Dining Services, Jones recounts what is a horror story for vegan students.

“Rosie’s was putting out a black bean burger and calling it vegan—they were calling it a vegan burger—and it had egg in it,” she says.

It wasn’t an intentional error. A Dining Services employee ordered a shipment of the Morning Star burger and confused veganism with vegetarianism, not really checking the label for animal products, Jones says.

“They didn’t know. They saw ‘black bean burger,’ assumed it was black beans and vegetables, and put it out there saying it was vegan,” Jones says. She informed her managers, and they removed the vegan label as soon as they realized the mistake, but negligence like this shouldn’t happen on a campus that is soliciting votes to be named one of the nation’s top vegan-friendly schools.

Jones says the incident was the only one she had ever witnessed or heard about, but student employees don’t receive specific training about what to look for and how to deal with handling vegan products when they’re hired to work in the dining halls. They are only required to attend a food-safety class, but she doesn’t remember vegan products being discussed. Dining Services and Rosie’s Diner management could not be reached to comment on their educational or food procedures.

This leaves Jones feeling skeptical when
it comes to ordering any food prepared on campus, but she says that the chance to ask about what is in your food and how it's prepared is always there.

"It's really the vegan's responsibility to know what to ask," she says.

While it might be a hassle to request that everything be washed and wiped down before a Dining Services employee makes your sandwich, Jones says that's what it takes to ensure your food is prepared in a safe, vegan-friendly manner.

Wheeler says the same thought process applies to accepting the fewer options on campus and learning to make the best of the same ones each day.

"You have to understand when you're a vegetarian or vegan that you're straying away from the status quo, so you're not going to have as many options as everybody else. That's just how it is—more people are going to eat meat than not, and you have to come to terms with it," Wheeler says. "You just have to figure out the system too. Like at Einstein's, I always get a hummus bagel and have them add lettuce, tomato and onion to it, and it makes it a sandwich."

The women agreed that Kent State is generally a vegan-friendly campus, and they will never go hungry. However, they all wish there was more education about vegan and vegetarianism among Dining Services employees and the general student population, and they don't think Kent State deserves such a high spot on Peta2's list.

"Is it a vegan paradise?" Wheeler asks. "No. It's not a paradise."
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THE FEATURES

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL THINGS

SOPHOMORE NUTRITION MAJOR EMILY PLAHER BUILDS MUSCLE AND PASSION AS SHE PURSUES A CAREER AS A BIKINI ATHLETE.

WORDS BY CARLEY HULL
PHOTOS BY LEAH KLAFCZYNSKI
Plajer’s 5-inch heels click as she steps onto the stage floor, but she zones out before she can worry about falling. Plajer can’t see anyone in the dark audience, she just hits her poses—an arm to the side, with a twist of the waist; a step to face backstage and pop up her backside; another twist with an over the shoulder glance—and she is already strutting backstage.

“It's pretty nerve-wracking, but you feel so accomplished after going up onstage in a bikini with a big audience,” Plajer says. “It’s so rewarding.”

She walks away from the Natural Northern Championship with second place and a 5-foot tall trophy. After three competitions, Plajer has two second places, one collegiate first place and a sixth place overall.

At the Student Recreation and Wellness Center locker room the makeup is off, but her blue eyes still pop from her faded tan. She is seven weeks into her 17-week training for her fourth bikini competition at the 2014 Jim Manion’s NPC Pittsburgh Championship on May 3. Plajer’s blonde hair is up in a high ponytail as she turns on her playlist of high-energy rap and pops a stick of Trident gum into her mouth. When she is out of the bikini, her stage presence is hidden. It is masked by a quiet woman with a girlish giggle and innocent smirk, but the bold bikini athlete still comes out in small doses.

Twenty-year-old Plajer is a Kent State sophomore nutrition major who does not fit the bodybuilding stereotype: she doesn't...
Plajer actually shudders and shakes her blonde hair when she hears the term "bodybuilder."

"People think if you are lifting weights you are going to get big like a guy, but that's not the case at all," she says.

Plajer is technically a bikini competitor, a new division of bodybuilding that debuted in 2009. The competition has transformed from women standing and looking pretty to women building lean, strong muscles that show off an hourglass femininity.

"Now you see girls who lifted and dieted to get there," Plajer's stepdad, Joey Huth says, "New bikini girls have muscle."

Both of Plajer's parents have competed in bodybuilding competitions for about six years. Plajer's mom, Kim Plajer-Huth, started bodybuilding in the figure division after deciding on a whim to try something new because she enjoyed lifting weights and working out. She also liked pushing her body to gain muscle and watching her body change after weeks of training. Within the last few years, she's moved up to the physique division. Plajer's stepdad started competing in light-heavyweight bodybuilding shortly after Plajer's mom.

Plajer's exposure to her mom's bodybuilding sparked her interest from a young age.

"The reason I got into it was because of her, and I liked the way her body looked when she was doing competitions," Plajer says.

Her mom's inner strength also inspired Plajer.

When Plajer was 12 years old, her dad passed away, leaving her mom to support her, her brother and sister. Plajer watched her mom struggle to overcome the tragedy while making sure she and her siblings stayed on track with school and kept a positive attitude.

"She had to support us all through that as a single parent, so she really inspired me to not give up," Plajer says, "It did definitely make me stronger and has made me not sweat the little things."

Plajer walks out of the locker room with her arms slightly bent to each side of her thin 5-foot, 7-inch frame, and you can see a small bulge of muscle from the sides of her athletic pants as she makes her way to the top floor weight room at the Rec Center. Today Plajer is strengthening her arms. Each day she works out a new body part like her shoulders, back, arms or legs, and she will start two sessions of cardio when she is closer to the next show. She is calm and focused during her hour and a half to two-hour workouts, and her gray T-shirt flaunts her biceps each time she curls a
Plajer placed first in the 2013 NPC Kentucky Muscle Collegiate Class B competition and hopes to have similar success in the competition she's training for that will take place in Pittsburgh this May.

15-pound free weight. Plajer has wanted to train for competitions since high school, but the stereotypes of bikini athletes kept her parents from allowing it.

"She always wanted to do bikini, but we wouldn't let her," Plajer's mom says. "My mom thought it was too..." Plajer twists her mouth in thought before laughing, "skanky, I guess is the word, because I was only 17 when I wanted to do it, so I waited until I was 19 to start doing it, and she was comfortable with that, and it's changed a lot over the years. The girls have become more classy."

She smiles in a wall-length mirror as she lifts, and looks confident even though she sometimes feels eyes on her muscular arms and legs.

"I just feel like people are judging me," Plajer says. "I don't know, especially the girls, but because I like to wear spandex to work out. I shouldn't let it get to me."

Today, no one gawks at her. Today is a good workout day at the Rec Center with more people like Plajer who want to improve their bodies.

"Maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm not getting judged." Plajer says, shrugging her shoulders with a girlish grin.

She's not trying to impress the rest of the room. She's instead focusing on improving her body in order to prove to herself that she has the mental and physical strength to live the bikini athlete lifestyle.

To get her body where it is now, Plajer has undergone intense dieting. Plajer's mom and stepdad are her coaches and dieticians. Her meal plan consists of eating six times a day every three hours to keep her body going. She is restricted to a few foods: lean proteins like tilapia and chicken, white rice and oatmeal for carbs, eggs and grapefruit. It's simple with nothing fancy, and contrary to stereotypical bodybuilding belief, Plajer doesn't take protein when she's training for a competition.

"I like the way my body looks when I'm dieting. I like to see all the changes, and I like when people tell me that I'm an inspiration to them because I'm doing this," Plajer says. "I want to make a career out of it. I guess, and get a modeling contract and sponsored by a supplement company and go pro. That's my goal with doing this."

Temptation is everywhere from college parties to fast food, so Plajer cut them out of her life. She rarely hangs out with friends and instead helps write their diets and training schedules (if they will actually stick to them). But her drive is what strikes her friends and family most. Training for competitions is a 24/7 balancing act between school, work, a strict diet and training regiment. It takes a lot of determination.

"It's hard not eating around here, espe-
THERE ARE SOME DAYS I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE GYM AT ALL. I'M SO TIRED, AND I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING ANYTHING. I JUST WANT TO SLEEP. BUT I KNOW I HAVE TO IF I WANT TO CONTINUE DOING THIS AND WANT TO DO WELL IN THIS.”

THE FEATURES

FEMALE BODYBUILDING DIVISIONS

Bikini - Women wear heels, jewelry and a lot of makeup. Lowest muscle tone division with women having lean muscle often in the arms and glutes to create the image of an hourglass figure.

Figure - This is a step up from bikini. Women still wear heels and are still feminine, but they have more muscle tone.

Fitness - Women are slim and muscular with shape but not bulk, much like the figure division, and wear heels in the bikini round. They are also judged in a second round that tests their athleticism by performing a two-minute routine with aerobics, dance or gymnastics.

Physique - This is a step up from figure but a step down from women's bodybuilding. No heels are worn, and women have more muscle mass than figure but not as much as women's bodybuilding.

Women's Bodybuilding - Women pack on a large amount of muscle, pushing the ability of the female body. No heels are worn.

For more information visit npcnews-online.com.
UNBREAKABLE BOND

KENT CITY POLICE OFFICER DOMINIC POE AND GERMAN SHEPHERD IRON BUILD THEIR SKILLS AND FRIENDSHIP DURING K-9 TRAINING CAMP.

BY LEAH KLAFCZYNSKI

Officer Dominic Poe searched 14 kennels before he found Iron, a calm 22-month-old German Shepherd from Czechoslovakia. From a young age, Poe wanted to become a K-9 handler, and after recently undergoing an assessment process, he was chosen for the position with the Kent Police Department. Poe then selected Iron as the department's second K-9 unit, and the two have since spent weeks bonding before embarking on a six-week training program at Von der Haus Gill Police K-9 Academy in Wapakoneta, Ohio.

The certification program trains K-9s in areas of tracking, aggression and obedience for 12 to 14 hours a day, five days a week.

But Poe says, “I’m being trained just as much as he is; it’s a team thing.”
RIGHT: On a Sunday evening, Poe leaves for his and Iron's third week of training. His wife stays at their home in Cuyahoga Falls with their other German shepherd, Mika, while Poe and Iron travel 3 hours away for training.

BELOW: Throughout training, Iron stays in a kennel, but when he and Poe are at home, Iron sleeps at the foot of Poe's bed. This particular morning, Iron is taken to the indoor training course for a practice narcotic search.
After Iron completes a training course, Officer Poe is required to take notes on his progress at the end of each day for official record.
RIGHT: With Officer Poe's guidance, Iron searches several rooms with hidden amounts of Marijuana, Heroin, Cocaine or Methamphetamines. It's important that during early training Poe helps Iron search the room to ensure he doesn't miss an area. As the weeks progress, Iron will search on his own and be thrown off by scent distractions.

ABOVE: Once Iron successfully completes a search, a toy is thrown at the area where the drug was found as a reward. One of the most crucial parts of the training process is also praise. "The dog needs to want praise more than whatever it is up against," Poe says.
ABOVE: Iron finds marijuana in a testing wall covered with nearly 100 holes. He is trained to sit or lie down once he finds the correct scent until he’s given a further command.

LEFT: Iron waits as Officer Poe steps away from him during obedience training. This is a difficult skill for the dogs to learn because they often form a strong bond with their officer, whose absence can cause confusion during early training. Patience is a key skill for the dogs to perfect before their official certification testing the sixth week of training. “I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t nervous, but I’m confident in him,” Poe says.
Iron is trained to release his bite only when Officer Poe tells him to. The dogs are taught Czechoslovakian commands, so they only listen to their given officer. Poe uses commands like: “Ke mně!” (Come), “Lehní!” (Down), “Pust!” (Let go).
ABOVE: Officer Poe relaxes on the couch with Iron on a Sunday evening at home before heading back to Wapakoneta for training.

LEFT: Poe patrols Main Street in Kent with Iron so he becomes used to riding in the car. Once Iron is certified, he will replace former K-9 unit Marty Gilland, who retired in June with his dog Felo. "Putting a hard-working dog like Iron with Dom is going to be huge for the city and its residents. I wish more people could see what these dogs are capable of when they are placed with the right officer. I believe Dom understands that, and it will be part of his job to educate the public that supports them," Gilland says.
THE FINAL MEASURE

WAH-CHIU LAI, AN ETHNOMUSICOLGY SCHOLAR AND KENT STATE CUSTODIAL SERVICES EMPLOYEE, HAS BEEN WORKING TOWARD HIS DOCTORAL DEGREE FOR ALMOST 15 YEARS. AS HIS DISSERTATION DEADLINE RAPIDLY APPROACHES, HE TRIES TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN A GRUELING WORK SCHEDULE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

WORDS BY EMILY MILLS
PHOTOS BY EMILY KAELIN

Wah-Chiu Lai snaps on a pair of rubber gloves and grabs a broom from the utility closet. He's wearing an olive green shirt embroidered with "Kent State University Residence Services," and his first name, Wah, in yellow thread. He sweeps the men's bathroom on the fourth level of Lake Hall, making sure he picks up every last dirt particle from the tile floor.

He pauses his sweeping, fishes in the deep pockets of his black work pants and pulls out a scrap of paper with a hectic scribble of letters and Chinese characters. He puts the crumpled paper back in his pocket with hands that are wrinkled and arthritic. These same hands used to play instruments with absolute precision, but now they work to keep Kent State's buildings clean.
Lai is a 64-year-old Chinese musician famous in certain circles who came to the area planning to pair the letters Ph.D. with his name. When his music career began to crumble, he had to take a job as a custodian to make ends meet. Personal struggles left him unable to finish his dissertation for several years, and now he has a year left to finish his degree.

Lai was born in China and raised in Hong Kong. As a child, he loved going to the Chinese opera, where the instruments imitated the sound of the human voice. He wanted to learn how to play those instruments, so his great-uncle taught him how to play. As he grew up, he learned how to play the sanxian, a three-stringed, plucked lute with a snakeskin resonator, the zhongguan, a four-stringed, moon-shaped Chinese lute, and the erhu, a bow-like instrument similar to the neck of an American violin. Because he was left-handed, he learned to play right-handed instruments backward from their traditional playing positions. His mother then forced him to become right-handed so that he would play the instruments the "proper" way.

Despite his love for music, Lai chose to go to school in Taiwan for history, his other passion. He attended the National Chengchi University in Taiwan for his bachelor's degree and the National Taiwan Normal University for his master's degree.

Lai couldn't shake the need to work music into his life, so he gave lessons to high school and college students in Taiwan. He performed on a Chinese radio station part time. He also performed with the Taipei Municipal Chinese Classical Orchestra, a world-renowned ensemble and the first professional orchestra in Taiwan, for eight years. He toured the United States with the orchestra, and while in the country, he realized many American books about Chinese music were wrong.

"I found they make many silly mistake," he says with a thick Chinese accent. "But later, I found out all these silly mistakes, or careless mistake, because there are lack of certain serious academic discipline." He decided to immigrate to the U.S. to pursue an ethnomusicology degree in hopes of correcting these mistakes. His friends, confident in his musical abilities, encouraged him to apply to Harvard, but he felt he wouldn't be able to afford the Ivy League school's sky-high tuition. He set up an appointment with the admissions director of Harvard's music program, and felt he knew more about Chinese music than she did.

"Frankly, you know too much, some professors, they scared. Really," he says. He doesn't like it when he can't learn from people who are supposed to be able to teach him.

"The number one expert in Chinese music, she didn't know too much," he says. "She give the lecture. I ask her questions she cannot answer. She feel pretty embarrassed. Yeah. That's normal."

So instead, he applied and was accepted to the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 1990, where he took courses until 1992. During that year, state budget cuts forced the university to terminate the ethnomusicology program, along with more than 100 other programs.

Lai, looking for a new job to sustain himself, found an opportunity with a friend in Los Angeles who owned a business. Lai, downtrodden after his program was cut at UMBC, moved to Los Angeles. The city's warm, wet weather is similar to that in Southeast Asia, so people from the region—China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia—settled in the West Coast city in the '80s and formed a large community of about 30,000 people that's full of small businesses. While he was there, his friend's father introduced him to a form of music Lai had never heard of before: Chaozhou music, named after a Chinese city in the eastern Guangdong province of China. Chaozhou is characterized by strings, gongs, drums and flutes. Lai performed with the immigrant Chaozhou musicians and studied them, spending several years in LA. Though he knew nothing about Chaozhou, he was determined to study it.

While he was there, Lai applied to the University of California, Los Angeles' music program, but he was denied twice because of his language barrier.

So, he came to Kent State in 2000 after being accepted into the ethnomusicology doctorate program. He took courses for his doctorate in ethnomusicology and directed the Chinese ensemble from 2000 to 2005. He finished his courses in 2003. The next step was taking his qualifying exam, a massive assessment that tested how much Lai knew about music. It was difficult for him to take because it was on Western theory and music history.

Lai passed his qualifying exam during the summer of 2005 and gained ABD status, or all but dissertation, the capstone to any doctoral program. He planned to write his dissertation on the Chaozhou music he had studied in LA in the '90s.

However, when his teaching assistantship for the Chinese ensemble expired and wasn't renewed in 2005, things came to a halt. His dissertation was placed on the back burner. In 2002, Lai married. In 2004, Lai was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and his wife filed for a divorce in 2006.

Lai says his bipolar diagnosis not only caused his divorce from his wife, but it also contributed to his inability to finish his dissertation.

Lai's diagnosis explained his periods of highs and lows, symptoms of the psychological disorder. At times he could work steadily for full days—accomplishing everything from writing his dissertation to cleaning his home. At other times he felt so depressed he wasn't able to move. He couldn't find the steady drive to work on his dissertation, so he stopped for nearly nine years.

"Most people don't understand—similar, my ex-wife also don't understand," he says. "I try to explain to her. I said, sometime I can look like very excited. I can work 24 hour or do the writing or do other thing or reading. And sometime you feel depressed, you cannot work properly. That is what bipolar [disorder] is."

He was running out of money after investing it in his collection of instruments, and he needed to find a job to pay back his doctoral student loans. So, he began working as a student painter on Kent's campus, occasionally doing custodial work.

One day, a custodial worker told him, "You're a pretty good worker. Why don't you apply to be a custodian?"

Lai, who knows very little about computers, asked his friend to help him through the application. He was offered the job and started working to keep residence halls clean.

Even though the switch from teaching music to cleaning buildings was major, his cheerful demeanor has not diminished, and his enthusiasm for his work, though drastically different, wasn't altered.
He says, “Good morning,” or “Hello,” to every student he passes. Most of them simply grunt or smile in return, but that doesn’t stop Lai from greeting the next one just as enthusiastically.

He typically works at least 40 hours a week, and he takes extreme pride in his work.

“I want to do other things other people think not necessary,” he says.

Even so, he knows he has 145 weeks until he can retire in December 2016, something he’s looking forward to.

He spends much of his time cleaning the third- and fourth-floor men’s side restrooms in his assigned area in Lake Hall. He sweeps and mops the entire facility, shines the mirrors and faucets, cleans the toilets and wipes down the shower stall doors. He even pulls out a tiny razor to scrape off some dried toothpaste on the wall, taking extreme care that none of it remains to mar his otherwise spotless restroom.

Lai peeks into a community room in the residence hall. He groans as he sees a table that’s covered in pencil marks. He can’t stand it when an area he’s assigned to isn’t clean. He hurries into the room and pulls a wad of paper towels out of a pocket. He scrubs the table vigorously, muttering quietly, until the pencil marks are gone and the table is spotless. He breathes a sigh of relief.

Andrew Shahriari, a Kent State ethnomusicology professor who’s known Lai since his days in the Chinese ensemble, describes him as kind and humble. He says he thinks Lai took the custodial job to remain at a place he loves.

“It seems that this is a place that he calls home, so he didn’t really want to leave, you know,” he says. “So that’s why he ended up taking that job, because that was available to him. But in his heart, he’s a musician.”

Arthritis has left Lai unable to play his beloved instruments, and his bipolar disorder had given him little chance of working on his dissertation. But medication has helped him live with the disorder, and he recently began working on his dissertation again on Thursday, Feb. 6, a day he describes as a pivotal turning point in his life.

Right now, he has the introduction and first chapter written, a total of about 80 pages. He says he has 135 pages written in his head, and he wants it to be about 200 to 250 pages total. He has a good start, but only about a year to write.

When students gain ABD status, they have 10 years to complete their dissertation. If they don’t, their doctoral credits expire. Because Lai finished his courses in 2005, he has to finish his dissertation by 2015.

Terry Miller, a Kent State music professor from 1975 to 2005, is Lai’s adviser for his dissertation. Lai first saw Miller in 1978 at a lecture in Taiwan for the Broadcasting Corporation of China. Miller didn’t know it at the time, but his future doctoral student was in the audience, rapidly listening to every word he was saying about music theory and music history.

The pair officially met when Lai came to Kent State in 2000 to take doctoral courses and direct the Chinese ensemble. Because of their long history together and Miller’s expertise on Asian music, he was the logical choice for Lai’s adviser. Now, they still meet weekly to discuss Lai’s progress, and Miller reads over his drafts and gives him advice.

“He doesn’t have any academic future because of his age,” Miller says.

For Lai, it’s strictly a matter of pride and determination. He feels compelled to complete his dissertation on a topic most people have never heard of for just that reason.

“That kind of music, those people—the Chaohou people in Thailand—they are of the majority of the minority, but in America they are minority of minority,” Lai says. “That is the different cultural background. Also, this music nearly already die in Los Angeles. I need to finish it because those old musicians, now most pass away. I learn from them, most pass away. And also, I collect so many information. If I don’t finish it, I feel it is a loss for other people.”

The dissertation is on Lai’s mind at all times.

“This year may be the last for me,” he says.

Lai wakes up every morning at 4 a.m. to work on his dissertation until 6 a.m., feverishly making lists about how he wants to write, or typing away in the early morning dawn. He falls back in bed for an hour, mentally exhausted, to sleep for another hour before getting up at 7 a.m. to work his custodial job for eight hours.

Lai’s life revolves around finishing his dissertation, and he doesn’t know if he’s going to, but he knows he would have given up long ago if not for his job as a custodian.

“I have no money, but I never feel I am really poor. This door may be closed for you; another one may be open for you,” he says as he pushes open a door to mop behind.

“If I don’t get this job, maybe I die already,” he says, then laughs heartily and continues to mop.
Speaking over the sound of a ticking clock, Richard Dutro tells the story of the five days that left him thrashing in his sleep and unable to find peace for a quarter of a century.

He starts at the beginning of his military service, just as he does every time he finds the courage to share his account of World War II's tragedies. As he begins, his brow creases, and he sighs heavily, looking at his hands as if he's waiting for the words to come.

In January of 1945, Dutro, a Zanesville native, boarded a ship that was headed overseas filled with 10,000 replacement soldiers for those "who didn't make it on Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge." At the time, he was a private first class in the 42nd Infantry Division, which was slowly making its way through Europe.

"We started our trek to where?" Dutro asks. "Nobody knew. I was only a Pfc., so it didn't make any difference. We were just following the orders of the higher-ups."

At 18 years old, he traveled more than 400 miles by foot, tank and truck with his fellow soldiers until they reached the Dachau concentration camp. The 42nd Infantry, 45th Infantry and Armored Division's tank group liberated the camp on April 29, 1945—a day forever ingrained in his mind.

The divisions weren't meant to find the camp, Dutro says, at least not to his knowledge. The 42nd was on its way toward Munich when members stumbled upon Dachau, but even before they arrived at the camp, horrendous odors foreshadowed what was to come.

"We started to smell some things on the way, and we were discussing amongst ourselves what they might be," Dutro says as his face falls. "Nobody really came up with an answer. We got closer, and the stench got more pungent. I said, talking to someone body, 'Have you ever been to a slaughter house?' I'd been to one in Chicago, and that's what it smelled like to me."

But that's not what Dutro and his unit found. They found Dachau.

"We didn't know it was Dachau," Dutro says. "None of us in the organization really understood. I imagine some of the lieutenants and captains and generals knew there was something, maybe, down there."

He says the men couldn't fathom that other camps like this existed. There were thousands, and they couldn't even grasp what was happening at Dachau.

As the unit entered, Dutro says, they saw people in striped uniforms throwing themselves on the electrified fence that surrounded the camp to short-circuit it, allowing people to escape their prison.

"We were told to bring the people back into the camp," he says. "This is difficult because we were speaking English, and there were the Polish, Germans, Russians—people from the Netherlands, from Belgium, from England—all in a camp. How do you communicate if you don't know the language?"

This was the first of many orders during their five-day stay. The officers told their soldiers they were not to feed the prisoners, no matter how much they begged or how emaciated they looked. Feeding the prisoners, Dutro says, would have surely killed them.

"The prisoners were so decimated in many respects that they could not digest or ingest the food we had," he says.

The soldiers were also ordered to not "mix" with the prisoners—many of whom had typhoid fever. They were told stay out of the barracks, stay out of the hospital area, and stay away from those who might be contagious.

"It was hard," Dutro says as his eyes fill with tears.

Dachau was created to house 4,000 to 7,000 political prisoners, Dutro says. They were those who were against Adolf Hitler's deadly campaign to establish the Aryans as the master race. For this reason, it was not originally a concentration camp; however, by the time Dutro set eyes on the camp, more than 32,000 people were being held, and some didn't even make it into the camp.

"The guards just shot them in the train," he says, choking on his words. "They never got out. They wouldn't even let them get into the camp."

But life wasn't any better for those who made it within the walls.

"People were standing there with just skin on their bodies. You could see the imprint of their knees and elbows—no flesh on the inside," Dutro says. "Just standing there begging."

It didn't stop there. Dutro says the Germans threw body after body into a pile, creating stacks that were eight to 10 feet high. These were the bodies that had not yet been cremated because the camp officers couldn't keep up with extermination. Not everything could be burned, however. Barrels stood six feet high and were filled with ashes, clothing, shoes, hair, teeth, jewelry and glasses.

"The Germans were very meticulous in their accounts, and that helped solve some of the problems when they went on trial," Dutro says, shaking his head. "Why would you have all of those barrels of ashes left? If someone dies and they cremate him or her, you're not going to have that. But if you have hundreds that you're doing it to..."

Even with the grotesque mountains of evidence, Dutro says people who lived in Dachau village, which is a little more than six miles north of Munich, denied the mass extermination—a belief that wasn't limited to Germany.

"For 25 years, I never mentioned what happened," he says. "The only way I found..."
peace with it was when people were saying it didn't exist."

He says even today, he receives letters from people calling him a liar for recounting the events that happened during his deployment, but instead of letting it upset him, he uses it as a reason to continue telling his story.

Now in his late 80s, Dutro speaks at events throughout the state, recounting the horrors he saw at Dachau. He often visits schools, like Lakewood High School, which is part of the school district in which he spent more than 40 years as an elementary school teacher.

He taught at numerous schools in the district and found himself instructing multiple grade levels—a time he looks back on fondly. After teaching for some time, Dutro became an administrator but still made his way into the classrooms as often as he could—reading to students, helping teachers with lessons—anything that would let him once again work with kids.

Lakewood High School principal Keith Ahearn says inviting Dutro back to the school district to speak about his past experiences along with Holocaust survivor and friend Joseph Klein brought life to the sometimes dull textbooks.

"History, at its core, is a story, and in this case, a story of enduring hope in the face of incomprehensible inhumanity," Ahearn says. "Students who heard these two speakers could not help but develop an empathy for the victims of the Holocaust and a sense of pride and respect for the soldiers who helped liberate the concentration camps."

Ahearn says it's important for younger generations to understand the brutality of what happened. Allowing someone who has seen it firsthand to tell his or her story is the best way to do so.

"The emotion was real and palpable for Dr. Dutro, and this was a story better than 50 years old," Ahearn says. "That level of emotion says something, and something that I think students need to hear. War is an ugly and brutal thing that changes the men and women who serve."

Dutro's kind smile and tempered disposition fade away as he remembers the fighting. He doesn't talk about the battles. If someone wants to hear about the conflicts, he says, he or she can find a book.

"War is hell," Dutro says. "No one was shooting back at us at the time. I wasn't afraid, but I was distraught. I was sorrowful to see people in that condition."

Though the Holocaust ended nearly 70 years ago, Dutro believes nothing has changed in the way of the world.

"It's a constant thing, and to say this kind of thing is not happening again is false, as I see it," he says. "It's happened in Syria. People are killing their own. It's happened in Africa with the Tutsi and Hutus. People are killing each other. Bosnia, Slovenia—they were killing each other. We haven't learned much. We have not learned much as human beings."

But that's not what he sees in the media or in the cinema. Dutro says war is made out to be an attractive adventure where the top officials are never killed and the enemy always loses.

"I always tell the kids, 'You can go to a movie to see glamorized war if you want, but it's not like that all the time,'" Dutro says.

Dutro closes his eyes as the clock continues to tick. He talks of his late wife and remembers the good times after the war. He saw his three children grow and taught class after class of rambunctious elementary school students, but he still catches himself going back to Dachau and remembering the terror of the Nazi regime.

"They thought they were doing right, and we were doing wrong. It hasn't changed," Dutro says. "And I wish it would."
LIBERATING HIS PEOPLE

JACK KLEINMAN, A CLEVELAND NATIVE, TOOK GREAT RISKS DURING WORLD WAR II—ALL IN THE NAME OF HELPING HIS PEOPLE.

WORDS BY MADELEINE WINER
PHOTO BY BRIANNA NEAL
A shrill blast of a German grenade would change Jack Kleinman’s life forever.

“It was Sydney Bernstein, the first fella who came into our outfit who was Jewish,” says Kleinman, raised an Orthodox Jew. “The Germans threw a hand grenade in one of the tanks and blew it to pieces.”

In shock, Kleinman salvaged Bernstein’s body from the tank and said Kaddish, the Jewish mourner’s prayer, as the battalion took its fallen soldier back to the camp.

“It changed my life forever,” he says. “Everything else means nothing to me from what I saw in that moment. Family, grandkids, wife—that’s what matters. Your fingernails don’t have to match your purse. That’s all a bunch of crap to me.”

Clad in workmen’s stained trousers and a black jacket, Kleinman slides into the booth at Corky and Lenny’s deli in Cleveland. He disguises his liberator status well. His white hair peeks out from the sides of his baseball cap that reads World War II veteran.

His 5-foot-2 frame bends into the booth carefully, as his feet are cold and his hearing weak from war he fought more than 60 years ago.

The 88-year-old plods a torn, brown paper bag on the table and pulls out a large, blue satin box.

In it, he reaches for a four-inch-thick binder with newspaper clippings scattered along the edges.

“I’ll begin at the beginning,” he says, taking a sip of his black coffee and opening the binder as he scans the first photo.

STARTING IN THE SERVICE

A fresh-faced, clean-shaven stud, Kleinman was the captain of the all-male cheerleading squad at Glenville High School. He had a lot of friends and had a few girlfriends, but his grades suffered. He had always liked doing things with his hands. At age 18, he dropped out of the 11th grade to enlist in the military. His three older brothers—Bennet, Seymour and Albert—did the same.

From 1943 to 1946, Kleinman traveled to seven different countries, received a Purple Heart medal, became a thief and witnessed countless deaths. He would be the first of his brothers to leave for war and the last to come home.

“It’s like it was planned in advance,” Kleinman reflects, “My middle name could be ‘bashert.’ That’s a Yiddish word for fate.”

Kleinman and his battalion of more than 200 soldiers entered Regensburg, Germany, after the concentration camps had been liberated. Technically, he wasn’t supposed to be there.

He had stood in a swamp for hours in frozen water. “Frozen feet,” Kleinman calls it, which sent him to a German hospital. Lying in the hospital bed, he drifted in and out of consciousness, but heard doctors and nurses speak of amputation. He knew the word because he had grown up with Yiddish, a Jewish language of Germanic origin.

“When I opened my eyes, there’s a doctor leaning over me, and I said to him, ‘Bennie Kappelman, I told you to get off at downtown Cleveland. What are you doing here?’” he says.

Kleinman grew up two houses away from the doctor, who healed his legs. A moment of bashert.

The then 20-year-old, who received a Purple Heart medal from surviving the incident, would have enough points to be discharged from the service and come home to Cleveland. However, that wouldn’t happen. Another moment of bashert.

“Somebody up there,” Kleinman says raising his ring finger to the sky, “said to the guy that was making my discharge papers, ‘Do not put down the Purple Heart on his discharge papers. He’ll have too many points to go home.’”

THE REGENSBURG 12

Kleinman stayed in Regensburg as a military police officer six more months until his points increased. Because he spoke Yiddish fluently, he became an interpreter for his sergeant.

He and his fellow policemen—some of them Jewish like him—monitored the holding area, where concentration camp survivors were detained until loaded on a U.S. Army truck to their final destination.

That’s where Kleinman met 12 Polish concentration camp survivors—seven boys Jack Kleinman discusses the lasting effects of witnessing the burned bodies of 700 fellow Jews in 1945 Germany.
and five girls. He and two other Jewish soldiers raided a German household in Regensburg and "threw the people out" so that the kids would have a place to stay.

"We took over their life," he says flipping to a picture of the 12 and himself in front of the house smiling.

To provide for them, Kleinman became a crook, or "an appropriator," he calls it.

"If one of the men (soldiers) left his shorts on the bed, he came back, and it was gone," he says. "When they went on rest and relaxation, they would leave their bunk empty, and I needed bunks for these kids to sleep in. They'd come back; the bunk, pillow cases and the bedding would be gone."

But Kleinman wanted more for the Regensburg 12, as the group of 16- to 22-year-olds called themselves. In Cleveland, he was part of a Jewish social club called Algeaman—"all good men." All 15 of its members served in World War II.

When they went off to war, their parents formed the Algemas and the Algepas, as support groups. One of the parents created a newsletter for the group named the Algean Grapevine, which would spread the word about the Regensburg 12.

"I wrote a letter to my mother telling her whatever that you can send me to help these 12 people—let it be it medicine, a toothbrush, canned food or clothing. They got together at my mother's house, all the women," he says turning to another page with the black and white picture of the scene. "They packaged 42 five-pound packages and sent them to me at one time."

Not only did Kleinman care for the Regensburg 12, but also, he used his military police status to continue to help other Jews who were arrested for smuggling and dealing as they tried to survive.

When American soldiers arrested a Jew, Kleinman would bribe the German citizens who worked at the holding area with a pack of cigarettes or candy to take the Jewish prisoner to a train station to escape the jail.

"Now if they didn't speak Yiddish, I would ask them to open up their arm to see if their arm had a tattoo," he says. "All the Jews had a tattoo somewhere, and I would get them freed."

Kleinman and his fellow Jewish soldiers continued to help the Regensburg 12. When the military raided German homes, Kleinman would "appropriate things," including a sewing machine the women of the Regensburg 12 used to make quilts, skirts and jackets.

THE GARDELEGEN MASSACRE

Before he left to go home, Kleinman and the 102nd infantry were called to Gardelegen, Germany, a city to the north of Regensburg. But they got there on April 14, 1945—two days late.

"The Germans took 700 people, put gasoline on them and burned them," he says.

Kleinman remembers 700 bodies, but historical accounts that name this tragedy the Gardelegen Massacre count 1,016 bodies among the carnage.

"The odor was unbelievable. People were still smoldering. We had to go out into the area and into the village to get the civilians to show them what they did and dig the trenches to bury the 700."

It was another life-changing moment for Kleinman.

According to the Jewish Virtual Library, victims were being transported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp that was to be liberated two days later. However, Nazi soldiers, knowing that Allied troops were close, led death marches in a hopeless effort to keep the war going.

Now, when Kleinman hears someone speak German or mention they want a German-made automobile, a wave of nausea comes over him.

"After we saw this, we killed them," he says about the Nazis. "Before that, we would take them (as prisoners). But after we saw that—German, Italian, whatever they were—we killed them."

COMING HOME

Kleinman returned to Cleveland after the war and started working as a handyman. He met his wife, Esther, and they had three boys together. Now, he has 10 grandchildren and one three-year-old great granddaughter.

"He didn't start talking about it until about 25 years ago when other people started telling their stories," says Esther, a proud Jewish grandmother, about her husband's service in World War II. "He used to have dreams."

Dreams about the war were one of the only signs of posttraumatic stress disorder Kleinman showed. He says World War II soldiers did not come home with the same mental instabilities soldiers serving in the Middle East have today.

In 1999, Kleinman and five of the Regensburg 12 met for a reunion at Park Synagogue in Cleveland. Seven of them had immigrated to the U.S. after the war. Four became lawyers, two doctors and one worked at the Pentagon.

Up until two years ago, Kleinman was the guy to call to repair your sink, paint your walls or fit your shelves.

Now, he says the things that occupy his time are doctors' appointments and funerals.

As Kleinman packs up his belongings and waits in line to pay his bill at Corky & Lenny's, a blonde, middle-aged woman puts her hand on his shoulder.

"Thank you for serving our country, sir," she says with a smile.

Kleinman pauses and looks up at her. His brow furrowed. Yes, he served. No doubt, he was a liberator. But in his mind, Kleinman still sees images of the smoldering bodies in Gardelegen and his comrade, Sydney, lying dead in his arms.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he says. "It's not about me."
Growing up in Cleveland during the Great Depression, Alan Silver dreamed of becoming a grand musician, taking the stage to charm the masses with his incalculable talent—and for a while, he did just that.

He played his $35 silver saxophone in downtown hotels and burlesque shows as a means of helping his family put food on the table during his teenage years. Some years, Silver says, he even made more money than his father, who drove a beer truck for a living.

Life was difficult, but he had music. Even at that young age, he knew this was what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. However, World War II changed what was once possible. In a few short years, Silver's dreams vanished, and nightmares took their place—a brash and constant reminder of the gaunt faces and stacked bodies he saw that now characterize Adolf Hitler's reign.

Nearly 70 years after the Germans surrendered in World War II, Silver recounts the horror he experienced when he liberated the Dachau concentration camp. It's a pain that has never left; a heartbreak that has consumed him. As a Jew, he has always wondered, "Why us?"

Now in his late 80s, Silver places his hands in his lap before turning his motorized wheelchair slightly left, and back again, in an effort to delay the retelling of his story just a few seconds longer.

Last year was the first year since his return to American soil that Silver has been able to share his story. For years, he carried what he experienced at Dachau in silence, unable to discuss the harrowing visions that plagued his daily life.

"I still find it very difficult to talk about this," he says apologetically before he finally musters the strength to tell the story rarely uttered.
CAMP PERRY DANCE BAND

Instead of waiting to be drafted, Silver enlisted in the U.S. army in 1943, hanging all of his hope on the prospect of being accepted into the Camp Perry Dance Band.

One of Silver’s friends at the time was a member of the dance band, and he told Silver that if he enlisted, he could almost guarantee Silver would be playing his saxophone in army garb the next time he saw him.

“I have to tell you, I thought I really made out,” Silver says with a hearty laugh. “The dance band was in Toledo, and it came to Cleveland every weekend. I told my father to pack my instruments up. I was joining.”

He traveled to Columbus, Ga., where he had his first interview; though, it wasn’t as simple as the optimistic 18-year-old anticipated.

“The higher-ups said ‘Well, I see you’re supposed to go to a band,’ and I said, ‘That’s right,’ ” Silver recalls. “Then they said, ‘Well, you can’t do that. When you were in high school you had very high grades, and we’ve decided you’re going to go into the Army Specialized Training Program.’ ”

Just like that, Silver was shipped to Fort Benning in Georgia for basic training, where he and others selected for the program learned technical skills thanks to a partnership with a number of American universities. Despite his poor mathematical skills, army generals determined he would study engineering.

“I can tell you,” he says, “I was not a happy camper, but we did what we had to do.”

The day basic training ended, the general stood in front of Silver and his fellow troops. Silver says he didn’t know what to expect, but when the general finally spoke, Silver wished that he hadn’t.

“The general said, ‘Soldiers, I wanted to let you know the Army Specialized Training Program has been cancelled. The only ones who are going to go to college are the ones who are already accepted into medical and dental schools,’ ” Silver remembers. “I said I’d rather go to the band.”

BODIES STACKED LIKE LUMBER

As a member of the 86th Infantry Division, Silver was shipped over to France. It was from there that the regiment began to march toward Germany, a country surrounded by horrifying rumors. None of the soldiers anticipated the actual conditions to surpass even the most hellish of the stories.

Silver closes his eyes as the memories he has tried so desperately to forget return.

“We went into Munich, and I noticed that there was a very particular odor about the place,” Silver whispers. “At that time, I have to tell you, I didn’t think too much about it.”

The regiment tromped on toward Dachau, the longest standing concentration camp set up by the Nazis, according to Steve Luckert, curator for the permanent exhibit at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Twelve years after its creation in March of 1933, the Germans vacated the camp when they heard American troops were on their way.

“As we came through, you could see on the fence what looked like pieces of clothing and rags,” Silver says slowly. “When we got closer, we realized they were people. Sickly thin, dressed in striped clothing, were people.”

Before the Germans left, they had informed their prisoners that if the Americans did come to Dachau, the American army would kill them on site without a second thought.

“When we went in, I saw a man holding the fence” Silver says. “I went over and tapped him on the shoulder, and he turned around in abject fear. I said, ‘Ich bin ein Jude,’ which means ‘I’m a Jew.’ He put his hands on my shoulder and he started sobbing, but there were no tears. He was so dehydrated that all he could do was sob.”

Silver stops and begins to weep.

“As the tears stream down, it’s clear why the wrinkles appear on his furrowed brow—constantly thinking, constantly re-living the worst days of his life.

Shortly after, his regiment was detailed back to where the ovens were—the source of the odor that still makes him sick to this day.

There were bodies on the ground ready to be cremated,” he says weakly, “Stacks of bodies. I remember seeing a baby lying there already dead, waiting to become ash. I have to tell you, anytime I get anything that begins to smell even remotely like that, I just can’t stand it.”

The odor permeated the inner recesses of his brain, causing nightmares for more than half of a century after his 1945 discharge.

SIXTY-SEVEN YEARS

After returning from Dachau, Silver married a young woman named Rhoda, whom he will be celebrating his 68th wedding anniversary with this September. Though he’d be hard-pressed to guess the length of their marriage, as he talks about her as if they are newlyweds.

“She’s my treasure,” he beams. “My life would be nothing without her.”

However, life wasn’t easy for the pair, who had two daughters soon after they married.

“We were living on $92 a month from the government, which wasn’t much then and is nothing now,” Rhoda says. “I worked the day until our first daughter was born because we needed the money. He was in school, working odd jobs. We did what we had to do.”

At the time of his daughters’ arrivals, Silver was studying to become a podiatrist, a career he practiced in Cleveland until his retirement. He also found his rightful place among a few bands in town, proving some dreams aren’t worth giving up on.

But Dachau still haunted him.

Taking a deep breath, Silver says, “One night early in our marriage, we were sleeping and all of the sudden my wife started screaming. In my sleep, I had put her in an arm lock. She was using her long nails to try to get me away from her, which I did. Thank God! Because I would have killed the most important thing in my life.”

He put his hand over his mouth, shocked that he’d just shared this memory.

“He carried a lot of baggage,” Rhoda says, “as did all of the men. You can’t go through what they went through and not feel anything or have it affect your life. The first couple of years were very tough.”

Silver’s nightmares continued.

“They’re all about Dachau,” he murmurs. “I just have to tell you, I know in my
dreams I smelled that odor—the one from the ovens. And I remember one dream in particular where I envisioned a baby being thrown into the ovens. Rhoda encouraged him since 1945 to talk about it, to let someone in, but he couldn’t—at least not until Stanley Bernath entered his life.

THE MEANING OF ‘HELL’

After raising two daughters and owning a bustling podiatry practice in Cleveland, the Silvers decided to move into Beachwood’s Menorah Park Center for Senior Living, an assisted living home minutes from the Malitz Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Stanley Bernath is a volunteer at Menorah Park, meeting with residents and telling them about his childhood in Austria’s Mauthausen concentration camp.

Unlike Silver, Bernath had been speaking about his experiences as a Holocaust survivor for years, which is how their friendship came about.

“Someone suggested that Stanley come talk to me last year,” Silver says. “I didn’t know who he was, but he started coming to me everyday. During this time, he said, ‘You know, we should talk about what happened in Dachau. You need to talk about it. This coming generation has to know that there is evil in this world, and the only way they’re going to know about it is to hear it from those who witnessed it.’”

After much convincing, Silver let the story wash over him. He told Stanley about the odor and the Jew who couldn’t cry, and eventually, he told an audience.

“Stanley dragged me to the first event,” Silver laughs. “I didn’t want to go, but he made me. I have to tell you, it is helping.”

Each time Silver speaks to an audience about his experience at Dachau, Bernath is there. Bernath begins the pair’s speech with his arrival at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

“In all my life as a kid, I heard the word ‘hell,’” Bernath says. “I didn’t know what it was until I looked out and they took us off of the cattle cars,” Bernath says. “It was Auschwitz. The most horrible sight I have ever seen.”

Bernath did not stay at Auschwitz long before he was taken to Mauthausen. When he arrived, prisoners were stripped of their clothes and separated from their families.

“Some people asked, ‘When are we going to see our family?’” Bernath says with a heavy sigh. “The guard said, ‘In about two hours, you can be with your family.’ Two hours later, he said, ‘Come out and meet your family.’” He pointed up to the sky that was black with ash and said, “There, There is your family.”

As Bernath continues, Silver closes his eyes and places his hands over his mouth—the pain is too much to bear. Soon, Bernath is handing him the microphone and placing his other hand on Silver’s shoulder.

Silver tells the audience about nearly killing his wife and the vile odor that followed him into his dreams. Bernath holds his hand and looks on as a parent would—proud of how far his friend has come.

“It wasn’t only six million Jews,” Silver says. “It was 20 million people that were killed.”

“Toward the end of this speech, Silver pauses and takes in the audience; this time, a group of eighth graders and parents filled the pews in Beachwood’s Congregation Shaarey Tikvah. We want you to know that there are monsters in this world,” he says. “Monsters who have no intention of doing anything but self-aggrandizement and making sure they have what they want, and to heck with everybody else.”

Setting down the microphone, the temple was silent as the audience comprehended everything that was said.

THE PRICE WE PAY

Since his first speech with Bernath, Silver’s nightmares have faded.

“I still find it very difficult to talk about this,” he says. “But my wife has always thought talking about it would help, and what do you know? She was right.”

But he hasn’t completely healed, and he doubts he will ever fully recover.

“Even now, it gets to me at times,” Silver says. “Not the way it used to, but it still gets to me. Not the war. The war didn’t bother me at all. I was grateful I survived. I was grateful that I had the experience, but Dachau was the pits. That’s all I can say. It was the pits.”

Because of this, Silver vowed to never return to Germany, and even the cessation of his nightmares will not change his mind; an oath Bernath understands, though he’s been back to Germany several times—even Mauthausen.

“My barracks, No. 6, is still intact,” Bernath says. “When I visited the camp, I showed my daughter, ‘That’s where I slept. That was my life.’”

Silver just shakes his head and says, “This is why he’s my hero.”

But Bernath doesn’t let the compliment hang for long, as he says, “This man is my savior. Without him and the other liberators, I wouldn’t be here. He may not have liberated my camp, but he was there. He was part of the salvation.”

Looking around Silver’s quiet room at Menorah Park, there are bookcases filled with pictures and walls decorated with portraits—all placed as an effort to move past the events of 1945.

It has taken a lifetime, but as he reaches into his hidden stash of chocolate jellies, he says, “I have to tell you, I think I’ve lived an idyllic life after all.”

REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST

Each year, staff members at Menorah Park Center for Senior Living take a bus and drive nearly six hours to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in D.C. in an effort to fully understand the events some of their residents experienced.

Steve Luckert, curator for the permanent exhibit at the museum since 1995, says it’s trips like these that make his job worthwhile, as a surge of disbelief regarding the Holocaust is taking hold.

“It’s very interesting that people choose not to believe the Holocaust existed,” Luckert says. “The Allies said it happened; the survivors said it happened; and the perpetrators said it happened. The amount of evidence is overwhelming, and much of it comes from the perpetrators themselves—millions of pages of documentation dealing with the persecution and mass murder of Europe’s Jews and the millions and millions of other people.”

But he and Tamera Elis, a Menorah Park social worker and dear friend to Silver, are optimistic.

“It’s through stories like Alan’s and Stanley’s that people really begin to understand,” Elis says. “They’re an inspiration—truly an inspiration.”

It’s through their accounts and other accounts that make the experience of the Nazi regime remembered.

“It was a state-sponsored, systematic mass murder of an entire people as well as the persecution of millions of people,” Luckert says. “You have six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust—about two-thirds of the European Jewish population eradicated in a few short years. Nazi Germany plunged the world into war that caused the deaths of some 55 million others, so in terms of importance, this is one of the greatest tragedies in human history.”

For more information about the Holocaust, visit http://www.ushmm.org/.
THE EQUALIZER

CAMPUS FIREFARM INCIDENT TRIGGERS THE WRONG ATTENTION

BY ALYSSA MORLACCI AND CHRISTINA BUCCIARE

On the night of April 2, 24-year-old Quavaugtay Tyler checked himself into the Robinson Memorial Hospital. His left hand bled profusely from the wound he'd created after triggering a silver Ruger 9 mm pistol earlier that night during a dispute.

Tyler also triggered a campus-wide lockdown that lasted three hours while more than 80 university and city policemen searched for the gunman, as Tyler was believed to be in one of the academic buildings.

Something else was triggered, too: national sites including USA Today, the Huffington Post and Fox news picked up a story written by the Associated Press that correlated the night of April 2 with the 1970 tragedy of May 4 on the Kent campus.

In a 100 word write-up, the line “The shot was fired near Bowman Hall, an academic building that was the site of deadly shootings by Ohio National Guard members during a Vietnam War protest in 1970” was included. The point is, first, inaccurate, as those who walk the campus grounds every day know Bowman Hall is far from the May 4 site by the Taylor Hall parking lot, and, second, it’s irrelevant.

On May 4, 1970, four students were killed when National Guardsmen fired into a crowd of Vietnam War protesters, sparking national outrage and leaving a lasting mark on this campus.

On April 2, 2014, a freshman student accidentally fired a shot into the ground during a dispute between two of his girlfriends.

Two unrelated stories, yet the media pushed them together.

When John Peach, director of public safety and chief of police, received the call at home that there was a gunman on campus, May 4, 1970 never crossed his mind.

“I don’t see any correlation,” Peach says. “I’ll say that very flat out. There’s no correlation at all, but I think Kent State will always be recognized particularly because of that May 4 shooting and therefore give more recognition when you’re using it in the headlines.”

Kent State will always be remembered for May 4, 1970, but it cheapens and disrespects the event when the media equates one student’s negligent behavior with a firearm to a multilayered political protest gone wrong that resulted in the loss of four student lives.

Both events are newsworthy, and neither’s severity should be downplayed, but any insinuation that the two are related is improbable.

Although the media most likely mentioned the 1970 event to provide context about Kent State, there are ways to get around it.

For example, The Los Angeles Times, a newspaper considered to be a national news source, only stated in the headline that Kent State is in Ohio.

Jerry Lewis, professor emeritus of sociology and scholar of the May 4, 1970 shooting, teaches a course dedicated to the event. Forty-four years later, he feels it’s time to move on.

“I understand why it happens,” Lewis says. “It adds context to where Kent State is, but what bothers me is they never talk about what we have done to get beyond the shootings.”

The distance from May 4, 1970 we crave is not in hopes of erasing it from our university’s history.

Rather, we hope it can release us from its hold over our future progress, at least in the eyes of the rest of the world, and also protect May 4, 1970’s monumental impact on freedom of speech and military force.
Haven't had a chance to pick up a copy of our April issue? Go to our website and read it online! theburr.com

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In a shelled-out parliament building on the border of Russia, a memory is preserved. This memory is the only one of its kind in the known world; it is a miniature physical representation of the city of Narva, Estonia. The town was decimated with a firebomb and destroyed during a campaign in World War II.

This man is an ethnic Russian who has lived in Narva for his entire life. He has been working on a diorama of his old town for years now, paying meticulous attention to the project and considering the time he’s spent on the structure to be feeding his obsession.

Narva is in the Schengen Area, a disputed border separating the Russian Federation from Estonia and the rest of the European Union. Narva also has a 97 percent ethnic Russian population. And, due to current events—specifically the annexation of Ukraine’s peninsula (which was voted on and passed the first day I was in the country)—the area has the potential to be a frightening place. Only it isn’t.

The city of Narva doesn’t want to be a part of Russia. I visited the city expecting to see a desire for annexation—a yearning to join the Russian Federation.

Instead, I found that a majority of the Russian population wants to preserve the past, not recreate it. I learned the importance of reporting, of being there and of listening to the voices of the people whose opinions make up the majority.
30 Days Without Internet

THE BURR

THE KSU BUCKET LIST

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