

Students host parties for pleasure

BY EMMA MUELLER
Staff Reporter

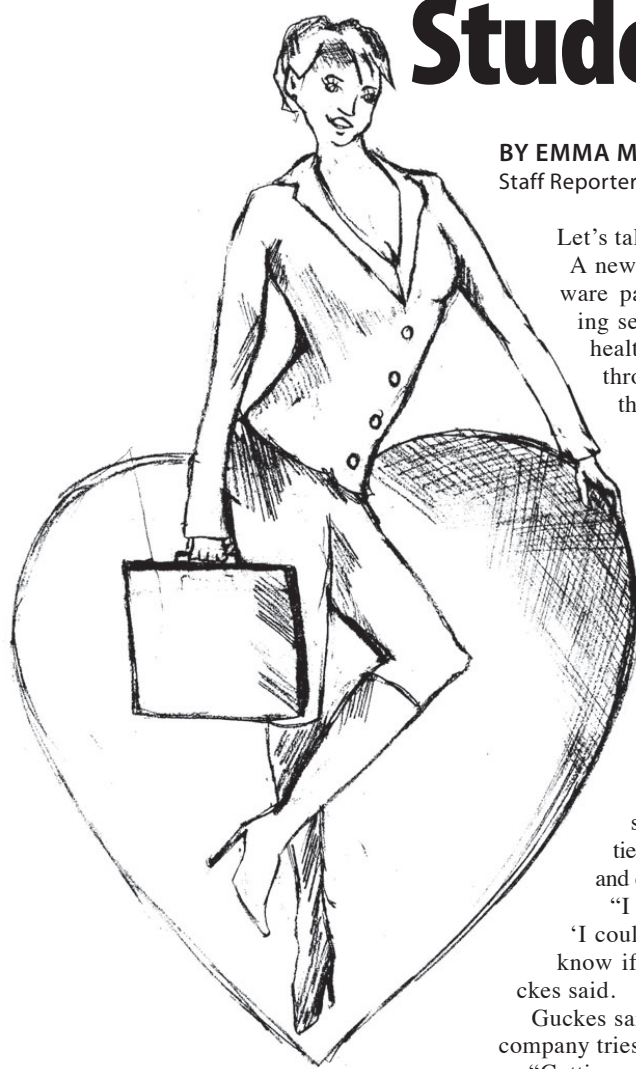


Illustration by Cameron Ballentine/ Index

Let's talk sex.

A new take on the traditional Tupperware party, Passions Parties are helping sexual awareness, well-being and healthy relationships among women through the sale of lotions and toys that provide sexual fulfillment.

Junior Beth Guckes and senior Courtney Wallace currently consult with Passion Parties, a party-planning company.

"I'd gone to a couple [of] different parties before and always thought, 'Well, I could do this, but I don't know if I want to do this or want to take on the burden of basically being a small business owner,'" Guckes said.

She said she was hesitant to start consulting with Passion Parties until she met Wallace at a party and discussed working together.

"I think both of us had the same, 'I could do this' moment, but 'I don't know if I want to do this alone,'" Guckes said.

Guckes said she particularly liked that the company tries to break stereotypes about sex. "Getting rid of the 'bad girl' stigma that

goes along with the idea of being comfortable with sexuality," Guckes said. "You don't have to be a 'bad girl' to like having sex."

Passion Parties is well on its way to eliminating the awkwardness of the word "sex."

"The more comfortable you are with talking about sexuality and sexual issues, the more comfortable you are with setting boundaries, too," Guckes said. "It's really empowering."

Wallace said she appreciates the focus on sexual health and well-being in relation to fostering a strong relationship.

"I think the basis of any good relationship is great communication," Wallace said. "I think that people forget that good communication also includes communication about sexual well-being and sexual needs, whether that be related to direct intercourse or whatever other types of sexual contact they are having."

Wallace said she also likes that Passion Parties fosters high self-esteem among women and teaches them how to convey that in a relationship.

"This company promotes how to basically have sex with yourself," Wallace said. "[So you are] able to tell someone else how to have good sex."

The company usually focuses on parties for women, but couples' parties also are an option, Wallace said.

"They're just not focused on that because we know that when women are in a group to-

gether there's a certain feeling in the room," Wallace said. "Women are more likely to be open with each other if there's not a male in the room."

Wallace said the party is about getting women together to talk about sexuality and stereotypes in a comfortable, supporting atmosphere.

"I think that it does empower women by saying 'You can have great sex with yourself or with other people, but you don't need someone else to help you have good sex,'" Wallace said.

Senior Bridget Rothermich has attended and hosted Passion Parties. As a hostess, she said she received credit toward purchasing free gifts, depending on the consultant.

"These products are not just for enjoyment, but they also have health benefits," Rothermich said. "There's actual science behind these products."

To allow party attendees to be familiar with the products for sale at the parties, there is a show and tell element. Unlike in shops, participants are able to smell, touch and feel what they are purchasing, without the worry of embarrassing questions.

"There are edible things too," Rothermich said. "You have one arm that is your edible arm, and the other arm is for smelling and feeling. That way you aren't just looking at it. [The experience is] very hands-on actually."

Sore throat can have many causes

During cold weather, it's not unusual to get a scratchy throat, and sometimes the surefire comforts of chicken soup, hot tea and a warm blanket don't make a difference. When sore throat symptoms persist, you might wonder if it's from a cold, strep throat or tonsillitis. A sore throat often can be caused by the common cold, or it can be more serious, requiring antibiotics to make the nagging pain go away.

Sore Throat

A sore throat often can be the first sign of a cold. In this case, your sore throat usually gets better or goes away after the first day or two and usually is followed by other cold symptoms.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for a sore throat caused by a cold virus, but there are things you can do to minimize discomfort and get better faster. To speed healing of your sore throat and cold, be sure to get enough rest, and remember that a healthy diet and plenty of fluids also help to speed healing.

Although over-the-counter cold

medications might relieve cold and sore throat symptoms, the benefits are minimal. Pain relievers, such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen, can offer relief from the aches and pains of a cold and sore throat. Sore throat sprays and lozenges also can soothe the throat and temporarily numb the pain.

Antibiotics should not be used to treat a cold virus and sore throat because antibiotics are effective only against bacteria.

Strep Throat

Strep throat, which is caused by Streptococcus bacteria, is a major cause of sore throat and tonsillitis. With strep throat, the pain often is more persistent and severe than with a cold. While a cold goes away on its own, strep throat usually requires antibiotics.

Strep throat spreads through close

contact with an infected person and/or sharing an infected person's personal items. If not treated properly, strep throat can cause more serious illnesses, such as rheumatic fever — a disease that might harm the heart valves.

If you have symptoms of strep throat, visit your doctor for an examination and a strep test — a painless test that looks for Streptococcus bacteria. If you have clear signs of strep throat, your doctor most likely will start you on an antibiotic treatment in order to kill the bacteria causing the infection. With proper treatment, strep throat usually can be cured

within 10 days.

If you don't feel any better after 10 days, let your doctor know right away. Also, even if you feel better after a day or two, never stop taking

"Only an exam by your doctor will determine whether your tonsillitis is caused by a virus or bacterium."

Health Talk
with Michael Duzan, D.O.
Northeast Regional Medical Center
www.nermc.com

the prescribed antibiotic until the full dosage is taken. The bacteria still can be alive, even if you are feeling better.

Tonsillitis

Sometimes, other bugs cause tonsillitis. If, like strep throat, the tonsillitis infection is bacterial, then antibiotics are given. However, if the tonsillitis infection is viral, antibiotics will not help. The virus will just need to run its course for the sore throat to go away.

Only an exam by your doctor will determine whether your tonsillitis is caused by a virus or bacterium.

For either type of infection, be sure to get plenty of rest, drink lots of fluids, use a vaporizer and take over-the-coun-

ter pain relievers. Eating soft, soothing foods such as ice cream, milk shakes and soup also will make your throat feel better.

If the tonsil infection does not respond to antibiotics or occurs repeatedly or if the tonsils interfere with sleep and breathing, your doctor may recommend a tonsillectomy, a surgical removal of the tonsils.

For any sore throat conditions, call your doctor if you experience nausea or vomiting, earache, headache, skin rash, painful joints, shortness of breath, dark urine or chest pain. For more information on sore throat pain, contact your physician or Dr. Duzan at (660) 397-2400.

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WITH THE INDEX EVERY THURSDAY MORNING

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