

# Small town couples get creative

BY EMILY WICHMER  
Staff Reporter

Kirksville couples have been turning to alternatives when date night rolls around.

It might be hard to find things to do in a small town, sophomore Ariel Foster said. But she and her boyfriend, senior Brandon Gordon, enjoy finding creative activities to do for their date nights, especially if it involves their shared pastime — video games.

Foster and Gordon have been dating since the end of the fall semester after being introduced by a mutual friend at a party. Gordon said he and Foster have found it difficult to brainstorm new ideas for activities they can do as a couple.

"It's even harder since we're in a smaller town," Gordon said. "There's one movie theater and one bowling alley and that's about all there is."

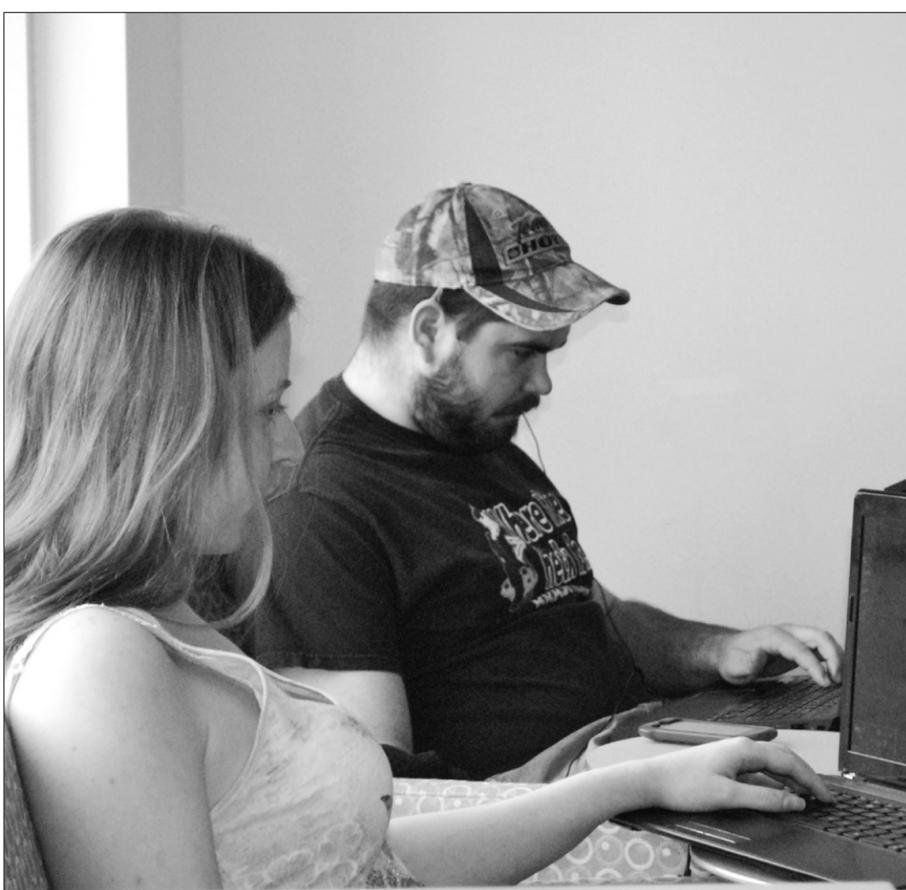
Their solution was to turn to video games. Foster and Gordon play different video games against each other. Gordon said their favorites are cooperative first person shooter games like "Halo" or online battle arena games like "League of Legends."

The most challenging part about their "gamer dates" is to keep from getting too competitive, Foster said.

"Since we've started playing each other, I learned how competitive he can be and definitely how competitive I can be," Foster said. "He's better than I am at the first person shooter games, so I usually get competitive and want to show him I can beat him."

Gordon said he gets competitive, but at least he knows how to admit defeat.

The trick to keeping the com-



Adam Antor/Index

Sophomore Ariel Foster, left, plays a computer game with her boyfriend, senior Brandon Gordon, right, Sunday at a West Campus Suites lounge. The couple started playing video games together when they started dating last semester because it is an activity they both enjoy.

petition from negatively affecting their relationship is learning how to leave game grudges behind, Gordon said. To maintain a healthy relationship, they learn to let it go when they lose, which is an important part of any relationship, he said.

Battling each other while playing video games is just one creative way they spend time together, Foster said. She and Gordon also play dodgeball on Saturdays with the Pitlords of Dodgeball, the Truman State club that hosts weekly dodgeball

games. Foster said she doesn't care what they do on their dates. She said she just enjoys spending time with Gordon.

Freshman Kate Ginnard said she thinks that is one of the best things about dating in a smaller town.

She said she and her boyfriend, Zach Shelton, have been dating for three years since they first met during high school in their hometown. Ginnard said her hometown, Hillsboro, Ill., is small and there aren't many things for couples to do for dates.

Coming to Kirksville from Hillsboro was not a huge adjustment, Ginnard said. Kirksville is bigger than Hillsboro, and she lives closer to the downtown area than she did in Hillsboro, she said.

When she and Shelton go out together, they enjoy driving around Kirksville and exploring the surrounding area, Ginnard said. She said they are trying to be more creative during their dates, but they also enjoy watching movies together in the residence halls and going out to dinner or to Walmart.

Because they have dated in smaller towns, Ginnard said she thinks she knows Shelton better than she would if they lived in a bigger town.

"Since there isn't much variety in what you can do, you spend a lot more time enjoying your significant other's company," Ginnard said. "Being with just them most of the time allows you to show your true self without worrying about what people in public will think."

She said she and Shelton like to joke and talk in silly voices when they are together, something she said would be a little embarrassing if anyone else heard or saw them.

Most importantly, enjoy the other person's company, Ginnard said. She advises other couples to take advantage of the perks of smaller towns and get to know their significant other better, she said.



Calli Lowry/Index

Senior Phillip Arnold practices playing bass before the Truman Live Talent Show Auditions on Feb. 3. Arnold will be playing and singing a comical song along with senior Luke Morris for their first performance as a duo.

## Students show off various talents

Upcoming Truman Live Talent Show allows students to display array of gifts

BY JUSTIN GUNTERMAN  
Staff Reporter

Truman State students are preparing to make a name for themselves in front of their peers at the Truman Live Talent Show. The event will allow students to show off their skills for a set of judges and, if all goes well, in front of the student body.

The Truman Live Talent Show is an event catered to students of all kinds, from vocalists to slam poets. The variety of students on the sign-up sheet is continuously growing.

Junior Abigale Berry, Truman Live Talent Show co-chair, said the show consists of an audition, a dress rehearsal and if the audition goes well, the final performance. Auditions will be in front of three judges who will select 10 to 12 acts to perform at 7 p.m. March 1 in Baldwin Auditorium. Admission to the final performance will be free to the student body, and performers can win up to \$150 in cash, Berry said.

Student Activities Board members will emcee the event, and guest performances consist of various performance arts groups and the winner of last year's show, sophomore Shelby Parker, Berry said. She said she is ecstatic to see a variety of performers in addition to the guest performances.

Event co-chair freshman Lauren Darter said a lot of work has gone into

preparing for the show. She said the SAB productions committee has worked hard since the end of last semester to ensure students get the best possible show Truman can offer. Berry said from making reservations and publicizing to purchasing prizes and food, the workload has a tendency to pile up. While the workload was heavy, it was manageable and worth it, Darter said.

The committee is overwhelmingly excited about the event. Darter said she is thrilled to work behind the scenes of the event. She said she looks forward to supporting her fellow students and ensuring they feel comfortable and proud of their entertaining abilities. Above all, she wants everyone involved to have a great time, she said.

Freshman Sujash Purna plans to perform covers of songs from The Cure and Death Cab for Cutie with his friend, sophomore Leah Dobby.

"Truman Live is a good platform for me to show my own versions of songs from my favorite bands, such as The Beatles and The Black Keys," Purna said.

Purna said he thinks the talent show is a great opportunity for students wanting to share and showcase their artistic skills.

"I am hoping this will be an amazing talent show," he said. "Cash prizes are a good incentive, but I am more excited to meet new people through this event."

Students interested in performing still have time to sign up for the event. Auditions begin at 2 p.m. Sunday in the SUB Down Under. Final performances are March 1.

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