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THE KENYON COLLEGIAN

Gambier, Ohio

THURSDAY, August 24, 2006

4 Pages

Skilled workers protest insurance hike

BY WILLOW BELDEN
Editor-in-Chief

Every day since Kenyon gave them its final offer for a new contract in June, 23 Kenyon employees have taken to Middle Path with signs, whistles and sirens protesting what they see as Kenyon's unwillingness to listen to reason.

The employees are carpenters, plumbers, electricians, painters and other skilled union workers from the Local 712 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE 712). Their contracts expired on June 30, and the union has not voted on Kenyon's proposal. Union members say they do not like the proposed new contract because it would require them to pay a higher percentage of their health insurance premiums than they formerly paid.

Workers contributed \$101 per month to their family health insurance plans under the old contract. The new contract would require them to pay \$151 per month, or 15 percent of the premium, in the first

year. The amount would increase to 17 percent in the second year and 20 percent in the third year.

All other Kenyon employees who receive wages similar to the UE 712 workers pay 20 percent of their health insurance premiums, according to Dave McConnell, Kenyon's chief business officer.

"We have asked them to participate in the health insurance payments at an equal level to employees in their category on campus," McConnell said.

The UE 712 workers said they feel they should pay a lower percentage because they have a different insurance plan than other Kenyon employees, and their plan is cheaper for Kenyon. The United Steel Workers Health and Welfare Fund Plan, which the UE 712 adopted three years ago, costs \$1,013 per month for a family plan—almost \$150 less per month than Kenyon's insurance plan. This means Kenyon is saving more than \$35,000 per year, union workers said.

see *PROTEST*, page 3



Willow Belden

Maintenance workers picket outside the Kenyon Athletic Center Tuesday to protest a \$50 per month increase in insurance payments.

Ernst ready for hungry students, Peirce shuttered

BY DAYNE BAUGHMAN
News Editor Emeritus

With Peirce Hall closed for renovation until at least 2008, the converted Tomsich Arena in Ernst Center will bear the weight of all the students who eat on south campus.

Director of Facilities Planning Tom Lepley said the former athletic center will be ready for dining on Saturday. Kenyon has already received its occupancy permit, and members of the AVI Foodsystems Inc. staff have already done some test runs in their new kitchen.

The switchover to Ernst, which began early last semester, has gone very smoothly, according to Lepley. "There

were no unexpected problems," he said. "It came in under budget—not much under, but under."

Lepley said all of the equipment in the new dining hall came from Peirce, from the tables and benches that lined the Great Hall to the ovens and dishwashers. An independent contractor moved these fixtures and installed the gas and electric hookups that power the equipment. Peirce has served as Kenyon's main dining hall since 1929.

Another feature of the project is the addition of a new walking path that will lead from College-Park Street across from Ascension Hall to the Ernst Center. This new path will descend the hill between Peirce Hall and the Bolton

Theater, crossing over the old path just east of the dance studios.

Eventually, Lepley said, the path will extend to the Kenyon Athletic Center (KAC) and another path will lead from Old Kenyon to the KAC, though this will not be done until Peirce reopens and Ernst is demolished.

With the completion of the path, the College hopes to rectify any safety issues that might have arisen because of the state of the current path. The new surface, according to Lepley, is one that the College will be able to keep clear during the winter months when students will have to descend the hill in the snow and ice.

The whole project, which had

a projected budget of \$600,000, was done "as economically as possible." According to Lepley, no engineer was hired for the planning because Kenyon was able to do it in-house, as Lepley knew exactly what had to be put in the center. Lepley said the space has "no frills" but that it would fulfill the needs of Kenyon students for the next year and a half. "It will be a unique experience for students, eating in a converted arena," he said.

The renovation of Peirce is about to reach a new stage as well. Demolition of Upper and Lower Dempsey Halls is scheduled to start Aug. 28, the first day of classes. This comes after crews finished removing the buildings' slate roof, which will be used for the

roof of the new dining halls.

Lepley said that the demolition of Dempsey will be done by the end of September and that the foundations for the new dining halls will be poured before winter so that further construction can continue in the winter months.

In Peirce, the Roth computer lab and the Bemis Music Room will remain open to students throughout the renovation.

Lepley estimated that the Peirce project will not be finished until the spring semester of 2008, noting that "you never know what you might run into" while renovating a 77-year-old building. He said that it would probably be "unwise and unsafe" to move any sooner than spring of 2008.



Mara Alperin

Joe Gavin '07 (left) and Billy Thomson '10 volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.

First-years dig in to Knox Co.

BY CHARLOTTE NUGENT
Editor-in-Chief

"I don't think I have ever been this consistently sweaty," said Sonia Heidenreich '10 as she pulled weeds in front of the Drug and Alcohol Freedom Center in Mount Vernon on Wednesday.

Heidenreich is one of 40 members of Kenyon's first-year class to whom four days of weed-pulling, Rototilling and cat-box cleaning sounded like the perfect way to end a summer vacation. As part of Kenyon's pre-orientation service program, the students (16 more than last year's 24) spent the Sunday

through Wednesday before first-year orientation volunteering at Knox County non-profit organizations.

"I wanted to do something to meet people in a smaller setting," said Jensie Harley '10, who hails from Charleston, S.C. "I thought it would be a way to transition more easily and to get involved in community service."

Guided by eight upperclass leaders, the participants in the affectionately-named "pre-o" completed maintenance and cleaning projects at organizations such as the Knox County Humane Society, the Brown Family Environmental Cen-

ter and Head Start schools in Fredericktown, Danville and Gambier.

Interest in the 2005 program caused student organizer Amy Thurber '07 and Assistant Dean of Academic Advising Erin Ciarimboli to expand this year's program to 40 students. "We hated turning people away," said pre-o leader Risa Griffin '09.

Pre-o leader Julia Rowny '08 said that while the program's growth in student numbers made "the leader presence quite small compared to last year," it did not affect the quality of the community service the group performed.

see *PRE-O*, page 2



THE KENYON COLLEGIAN

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Aristocraps & sign-wavers?

Public disputes make people uncomfortable, especially when they upset the atmosphere of an expensive private college in an idyllic rural setting. New students and their families arrive on campus today as 23 Kenyon skilled-trades employees engage in intermittent protest of what they feel is unfair treatment by the College administration regarding their health care plan. (see "Skilled workers protest insurance hike," page 1).

While it is understandable that new students, their parents, and returning students are concerned about how this protest will affect campus life, it is important that the Kenyon community not give in to the knee-jerk behavior that often surrounds labor disputes, be that behavior reactionary or radical.

A recent letter that Kenyon sent to parents assured that "this situation should not have a negative impact on your student's Kenyon experience." The perception of Kenyon as a bastion of snootiness is already deeply rooted in Knox County, exemplified by an old truck on Route 229 that now reads "Aristocrap City Next Left" on the side.

In another vein, e-mails sent by Kenyon United Students Against Sweatshops include spotty information on the relative merits of the Kenyon and UE 712 health plans but end with the exhortation "If you see a protest, join in!"

Are these communications really what Kenyon is about? One would hope that Kenyon parents, when reading about a labor protest, would feel primary concern for the workers and their families that may be affected by a change in health care plans, rather than the availability of their child's custom-made omelette in Gund on Sunday morning.

One would also hope that parents and students would act on their concern by informing themselves fully about the nature of the dispute between the College and the skilled-trades workers, rather than jumping in a picket line simply because a protest exists. Neither of these approaches will help bring the dispute to a conclusion that pleases all parties.

Kenyon is a community of friends and learners that exists only because of students' dedication to rigorous study and thoughtful debate, be it in class or in your friend's moldy basement New Apartment on Friday night. As the class of 2010 arrives on the hill, it would behoove us to think hard about what kind of community we are. Neither "Aristocrap City" nor purposeless sign-waving are part of the Kenyon we know.

staff editorial

PRE-O: 40 students volunteer

CONTINUED from page 1

"The only time we didn't have enough to do was when we went to the wrong place!" she said. "[The organizations] have a lot to do that they didn't necessarily have time to do during the summer."

Vice President of Knox County Habitat for Humanity John Darmstadt agreed. "It's good for us, and it gives the students a chance to meet each other," he said.

Rowny, who will be the pre-o student organizer next year, hopes to keep the number of students the same while recruiting more leaders and maintaining its close-knit feel. "The academic advising group is thinking about running another program, and we wouldn't want our

program to become a second choice for people," she said. "If 100 people are on campus early, why not just call it orientation again?"

Students were enthusiastic about their first days at Kenyon with pre-o. "I think this makes more sense than pre-orientation programs my friends are doing [at other schools], because it's on campus and in the community," said Lucie Alig.

'10, who is from Indianapolis. "Some of my other friends go to campus, throw all of their stuff in the lobby of a dorm and then go to another state for a trip. I'd rather meet people in the setting I'll be in."

Students said the program also helped demystify certain aspects of going away to college. "For the first few days it was kind of awkward," said Heidenreich. "It was a situation where we were all looking to make our best friends ever. But we all talked about that and it's better now."

But the end of pre-o and the beginning of first-year orientation looms large. "It's exciting to meet other people," said Harley. "But I'm nervous for tomorrow when all the parents will descend on us. I think I might just go down to the BFEC and hang out for a while."

Dayne Baughman
Allison Price '10
volunteers at the
Knox County
Humane Society



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Deli has constructed a fence-like structure filled with flowers. At first sight, it seems to be a nice addition to the streetscape. That is until I am told that only Deli customers can SIT there. Only people eating Deli food can EAT there. And, if the Deli is closed, no one can BE there. And, certainly no one can sit there and eat food not from the Deli, even if the Deli is closed. So when the Deli is closed, the gates are tied shut so that no one can enjoy this space.

In essence, what seemed like a nice addition, is really just a barricade. It's like setting up a "No Trespassing" sign along the main street of town. It is unwelcoming and restrictive – it's un-Kenyon-like.

Why do this? Particularly when there is concern that the center of campus will shift to the KAC and fewer people will want to hang around what has been the heart of town.

As for myself, I will not eat at the Deli again. I've spent six years on campus, so far, with three kids as Kenyon students. I have never had such an un-Kenyon-like experience on campus. This fencing is really unlike all things Kenyon.

Nancy Zivitz Sussman

REACHING THE COLLEGIAN

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The opinions page is a space for members of the community to discuss issues relevant to the campus and the world at large. The opinions expressed on this page belong only to the writer. Columns and letters to the editors do not reflect the opinions of the *Kenyon Collegian* staff. All members of the community are welcome to express opinions through a letter to the editors. *The Kenyon Collegian* reserves the right to edit all letters submitted for length and clarity. The *Collegian* cannot accept anonymous or pseudonymous letters. Letters must be signed by individuals, not organizations, and must be 200 words or less. Letters must also be received no later than the Tuesday prior to publication. *The Kenyon Collegian* prints as many letters as possible each week subject to space, interest and appropriateness. Members of the editorial board reserve the right to reject any submission. The views expressed in the paper do not necessarily reflect the views of Kenyon College.

Tom Waits: 56 and still rockin'

BY TED HORNICK
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus

To a proud and initiated few, the name "Tom Waits" summons musical memories of sad stories and morbid ballads accompanied by a surreal array of unconventional instruments (such as screeching horns and clanging drums), all masterminded by a gravel-voice, howling madman. To others, it conjures images of an indecipherable singer who sounds like Cookie Monster.

The mad, brilliant and undeniably unique Tom Waits returned to Ohio for the first time in years as the last stop on his latest tour, to promote an upcoming three-CD set of rarities entitled *Orphans*. The tour ran from Aug. 1 to 13 and consisted of nine shows, the last two a pair in Akron and Cleveland. The Cleveland show, a last-minute surprise set at the House of Blues (scheduled for immediately after the Akron show), caught numerous fans off-guard, and crowds began lining up outside the Akron Civic Theatre hours early because Waits sells out venues with frightening speed.

Inside the actual venue, fans were surprisingly relaxed as they were ushered to their seats and made to wait for a half-hour. Waits' touring

band members came out from behind a clear curtain that showcased each of them in silhouette: guitarist Duke Robillard, bassist Larry Taylor, pianist/xylophonist/jack-of-all trades Bent Clausen, and Waits' son Casey, serving as the band's drummer. Waits stalked on last and posed like a crucified scarecrow for a moment before grabbing the mic and grunting, "Good evening!"

What followed was a barrage of twenty-three songs as Waits screamed, shouted and shimmied across the stage, interrupted only by his devotees' catcalls and an occasional break to catch his breath. Perhaps the sweetest moment of the show was when most of the band exited, leaving only Waits, Taylor, a bass and a piano on a stage that seemed smaller and felt more intimate. Waits used this staging to embrace his inner comedian, and launched a hilarious string of stories at the audience. After his comment that the venue sold out in ten minutes was met by some 2,000 cheering voices, he smiled and said, "Yeah, I was pretty angry too."

Waits chose a more eclectic mix of his material, eschewing classics like the hard rock song 'Goin' Out West' (reverted for its use in the cult

film *Fight Club*) for more calm tunes like 1986's 'Clap Hands' (which every audience member clapped along for) and the surreal 'Eyeball Kid,' which tells the story of a circus ringleader's relationship with a living, breathing, baby-sized eyeball.

Waits did two encores, leaving the venue twenty minutes before he was set to play another show in Cleveland; reports say that concert got underway at two in the morning the next day. Waits' long-time collaborator and hipster moviemaker Jim Jarmusch, himself a native son of Akron, was also present and cheering at both venues.

Speaking without my bias as a Waits-aholic clouding my critical opinion, I can safely say the night was one of the best concerts I've ever seen. One can only hope Tom will tour at least once more before I have kids to take to the show.

We at the *Collegian* wish to thank Ron Griggs, director of information systems, for setting up the computer network at our new offices.

We appreciate all your help!

Stems bound for Appreciation at Kenyon

BY TED HORNICK
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus

A new year at Kenyon means new students, new classes, familiar foods and—lucky us—a new band at the Horn Gallery, a popular spot for both campus musicians and indie bands. The Horn kicks off its year next week with Chicago's Bound Stems. The critically acclaimed Bound Stems are a talented group of rockers whose sound recalls the emotional and moody lyrics of Elliott Smith and the unpredictable weirdness of the Flaming Lips. (That's a good thing).

The band's lineup is guitarist Dan Fleury, guitarist and singer Bobby Gallivan, Evan Suit on drums and tapes, Dan Radzicki on keys, vocals and bass and Janie Porche on vocals, guitar, violins and samplers. The only thing more interesting than the band members' instruments is their roots—Suit used to play with Harvey Danger and Gallivan used to teach high school history, for starters.

Asked about their sound and the numerous labels the media has assigned the band, Gallivan explained that the band is "flattered that we're mentioned in the same breath as some of these artists, but we...generally don't seek out certain

comparisons." He emphasized the group's sound as a personal reflection of their own creativity, saying, "As much as other bands affect us, we never sit down and say to ourselves, 'Okay, let's write a Pavement song or an Arcade Fire song.'"

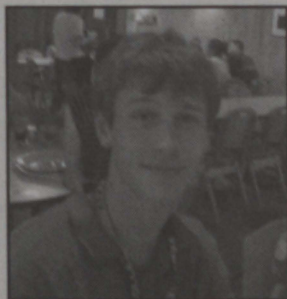
The band's first full-length album, "Appreciation Night," was written and recorded in Chicago, a fact that the band's press kit emphasizes as one of its strengths. Gallivan explained that the album was "written/recorded in the throes of a Chicago winter, and I think you can hear that. ... I suppose if we wrote and recorded an album in a different city/region it might come through in the writing and recording." We'll have to wait for the group's next efforts to be sure.

Bound Stems have such a clear intelligence and enthusiasm for music that it's impossible to miss. Whether it's the informative and fun DIY nature of their website (<http://www.boundstems.com>) or their insistence that the best meal to eat immediately following a tour is "A big-ass bowl of spaghetti," these guys are the real deal.

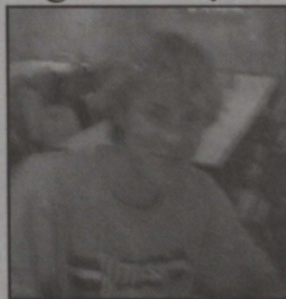
If you go
Monday, Aug. 28
9:00 p.m.
Horn Gallery

RANDOM MOMENTS

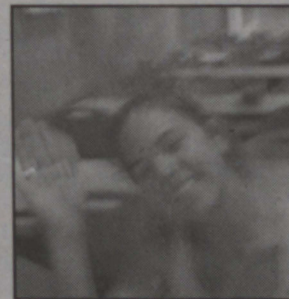
If you hadn't come to Kenyon, what would you be doing with your life?



Peter Johnson '10
"Wakeboarding in Singapore."



Steven Leiser-Mitchell '10
"Acting in a local troupe."



Josie Comas Bardot '08
"I would be the Little Mermaid in the crystal bubble in the Disneyland parade."

PROTEST: No vote on contract

CONTINUED from page 1

"Kenyon has pocketed the savings derived from our members being in the UE/Steelworker Insurance Plan for the last three years," the UE 712 wrote in a statement on Aug. 9.

"We feel since we did the footwork and got our own insurance plan that's better and cheaper, we should share in the savings," said Bob Smith, president of the Local 712 and a carpenter at Kenyon.

Kenyon administrators said the College is not actually saving much. The steelworker insurance plan is cheaper in part because it does not cover retirees, according to McConnell. Smith, however, said the steelworkers plan covers retirees in other locations across the U.S. and will cover Kenyon retirees if a recent proposal passes.

"The College continues to pay for [UE 712] retirees and certainly doesn't save money by doing so," said President Georgia Nugent.

During negotiations, the UE 712 workers asked the College to cover 100 percent of their health care

costs, Nugent said.

"If you look at the larger world, health care costs have risen dramatically in America in the last 10 years, and essentially every employer in America is having to adjust their premiums," she said. "The notion that employees should carry zero percent responsibility for their health care does not seem viable in the contemporary world."

The contract Kenyon offered the skilled workers includes a 12 percent wage increase over the next three years and a \$500 signing bonus. These are meant to help offset the approximately \$600 extra that the UE 712 workers will pay each year toward their health insurance, McConnell said. "In the first year, it really shouldn't have an impact on them financially," he said.

"We've made a very competitive offer to them," said Nugent. "These workers make 40 percent more than comparable workers at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, 20 percent more than at Knox Community Hospital and the same as at Denison."

UE 712 workers said they fear that the increase in their wages would not fully compensate for the amount they would have to pay for insurance. Smith said he thinks they will have less disposable income within three years' time than they have now, given inflation rates.

Tammy Gocial, Kenyon's new dean of students, sent a letter and an e-mail to the parents of all Kenyon students alerting them of the UE 712 picketing.

"We felt that if students and parents were greeted by a small, noisy, angry group of people that it was appropriate to warn them ahead of time," Nugent said. "Another thing we felt was in particular new students and their families might be concerned that the College would shut down. We wanted to get across that this wouldn't affect the safety of and services for students."

Both UE 712 workers and College officials said they hope a strike will be avoided, although McConnell said the workers have the right to reject the proposed contract and to strike.

Kenyon sports teams ready to go for 2006 season

BY SARA KAPLOW
Sports Editor

Volleyball

After a summer of uncertainty, the Ladies volleyball team is back on track with a new coach and four new players. Adrienne Delph will replace Todd Raasch, who spent two years as head coach and led the Ladies to a 9-16 record last year.

Delph brings Division I experience to the team, as she held assistant coaching positions at Samford University and the Ohio State University and was the head coach at Troy University for four years. In addition to collegiate experience, she was the club director for Junior Olympic clubs here in Ohio and in Wisconsin.

The Ladies have four seniors returning and boast an equal number of first-year players. The first-years will have to gain all the experience they can get in one short season before half of the team departs. The team plays its first match on Sept. 1 at Kalamazoo against Anderson University.

Football

The Lords have a lot to live up to this year after achieving their best record in years last season. Their 6-4 record earned them second place in the NCAC, and with 17 returning starters, their chances are good for another impressive year.

Senior running back Alby Coombs will be back following an injury that kept him out of the action the final three games of last season. In addition, junior quarterback Rafael Sanchez is back to lead the offense, which returns nine starters total. On the defensive side of the ball, the Lords return eight starters including seniors Andy Fuchs, who boasted 9.5 sacks and 53 tackles last season, and Dave Cicetti, who has 75 tackles so far in his career.

Alongside the familiar faces will be 27 new recruits. Unfortunately for football fans, the team's first four games are away, with their first game taking place on September 2 at Grinnell College. They return to McBride Field on October 8.

Field Hockey

After posting a 10-7 season and being honored by the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) for having a high team grade point average, the Kenyon field hockey team is poised for a positive season.

The team was acknowledged by the NFHCA for having the third highest GPA in Division III with a cumulative 3.45.

The team will be without leaders Kate Flinner '06 and Molly Mickinak '06 but have five rising seniors to fill that void. Their tough schedule kicks off on Sept. 2 at Franklin and Marshall College.

Soccer

The female footballers are in a unique position after posting an impressive 10-7-1 record last season that took them to the NCAC post-season for the first time, as they have no senior players and only eight juniors on the 28-woman squad. That said, 15 members of the team are returning to guide the team to

another extended season.

Juniors Jean Arnold and Amy Kessler, who combined for five goals last season will be supported on the defensive end by junior goalkeeper Rosie Davis, who had seven shutout wins last year.

The Ladies take to the field for the first time on Sept. 2 against John Carroll University at McBride Field.

With a 4-9-4 record, the men's side improved upon their 3-16-0 record in 2004. Though they lost seven players to graduation, the team has a strong senior class with Yoni Geffen, Michael Kranz, Hans Wetzels, Norm Kaufmann and Todd Walters.

The Lords begin their season away against Otterbein College at Wittenberg University on Sept. 2.

Cross Country

Both the men's and women's cross country teams have a lot to be pleased about after last season's results at the regional meets. The men's team placed 15 out of 34 following a fourth-place finish at the NCACs, while the

women finished in eighth place out of 31 teams.

Though the men's team lost seniors Sean Strader and Robbie Molden to graduation, they have two seniors returning in Ryan Weinstock and Matt Lobdell. Sophomores James Boston and Chris Houser, who were instrumental in last year's success, will be back to improve upon their first-year accomplishments.

After having two runners finish in the top 50 at last year's Great Lakes regional competition, including returning sophomore Jessica Francois, the Ladies are hopeful that this will be another strong season. Though they lost some seniors to graduation, including Lauren Rand who was one of the two top-50 finishers at regionals, the team has a large incoming class and five seniors in position to lead the team to another fifth-place finish at the conference meet.

Both the men's and women's teams take to the course for the first time at Denison University's Early Bird Meet on Sept. 1.

FIRST-YEAR ORIENTATION 2006

Thursday, August 24

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. — Registration

Gund Commons Lounge

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. — Accounting / Financial Aid open

Eaton Center/Stephens Hall

2:00 p.m. — Opening Convocation

Samuel Mather Lawn

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. — Dinner with Upperclass Counselors

Gund Commons

8:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. — Creative Dating with David Coleman

Rosse Hall

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. — Picnic

First-year quad

7:00 p.m. — First-Year Sing Rehearsal

Rosse Hall

Saturday, August 26

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon — Faculty Advisor Appointments / Course Registration

Various Locations

4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. — Academic Integrity Meeting

Rosse Hall

5:30 p.m. — Convening Dinner (appropriate dress)

Ernst Center

Friday, August 25

8:15 a.m. - 9:50 a.m. — Foreign Language Examinations

Various Locations

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. — Academic Department Fair

Ascension Hall

4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. — Pre-professional advising

Ascension Hall

Sunday, August 27

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. — "College Close-up"

Old Bank Building

5:30 p.m. — All College Picnic

Ransom Lawn

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. — Campus Cabaret

Rosse Hall

Kenyon graduates have worked here:

ABC News ABC Sports Associated Press Bloomberg Business News CBS Sports Cincinnati Enquirer
Cincinnati Post ESPN Fortune Magazine Gannett Newspapers In These Times The Kenyon Review
Life Morningstar Playboy Reuters Time TV Guide U.S. News and World Report Wall Street Journal

After they worked here:

The Kenyon Collegian

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