"Horror is a different way of looking at things"

SHANNON EHRIN
culture editor

The Eerie Horror Film Festival gives filmmakers the opportunity to showcase their work and Mark Steensland, a lecturer in the Communication department here at Behrend as well as filmmaker, is no stranger to the Festival.

Steensland has worked in the business for many years, but only started showing films at the festival the second year he moved to Erie. He initially became involved because word that George Romero would be in attendance and Steensland was once an extra in one of Romero's films, *Day of the Dead*. Unfortunately for Steensland, Romero was not able to attend, but by that time Steensland was already well a part of the festival. Eventually, he took over as vice president.

"My memories [of the festival] aren't really around the films so much as some of the really fun things that have happened for me personally."

One of Steensland's favorite films and one that he tried to remake, *Dark Night of the Scarecrow*, was screened at the festival in its restored version before anyone else got to see film. Steensland was able to show his film, *Peekers*, and introduce *Scarecrow*.

"The neat thing about it is, yes it's a film festival, [but] there's a kind of fun carnival atmosphere to it that makes it unique."

All of his movies that have been made since living in Erie have been shown at the festival. This is the first year that he has not shown at the festival, mostly because he is currently working on a book.

When it comes to making films, Steensland believes that the best style "is the invisible style, so I try to stay out of the story as much as possible."

His movies are usually under ten minutes, although he has made two feature length films: a fiction crime/drama and a science fiction documentary. While both of the feature films were not horror, that remains Steensland's specialty.

"As I got interested in film, I gravitated towards [horror]. [My] films typically don't have a drop of blood, they don't have any foul language, but they are scary and in my mind that's what a really good horror story is," Steensland said.

It takes a team of people to create Steensland's films and students have been included in his teams.

> "...if you take the witches out of Macbeth or the ghost out of Hamlet, you don't have a story left..."
> Professor Steensland

"I had a student work on Peekers as a senior project," Steensland said. "He produced it with me and we spent the whole semester working on the movie and then the next semester he did a semester abroad in the U.K. and we had our world premiere at a film festival in Scotland and he got to attend the festival and we won a prize at the festival. That was really satisfying because it was his senior project and he worked on it from the beginning."

The last two films Steensland made were shown at over 50 film festivals across the world. His most recent films include: *The Ugly File* (2009), *Peekers* (2008), *Dead@17* (2007) and *Lovecraft's Pillow* (2006).

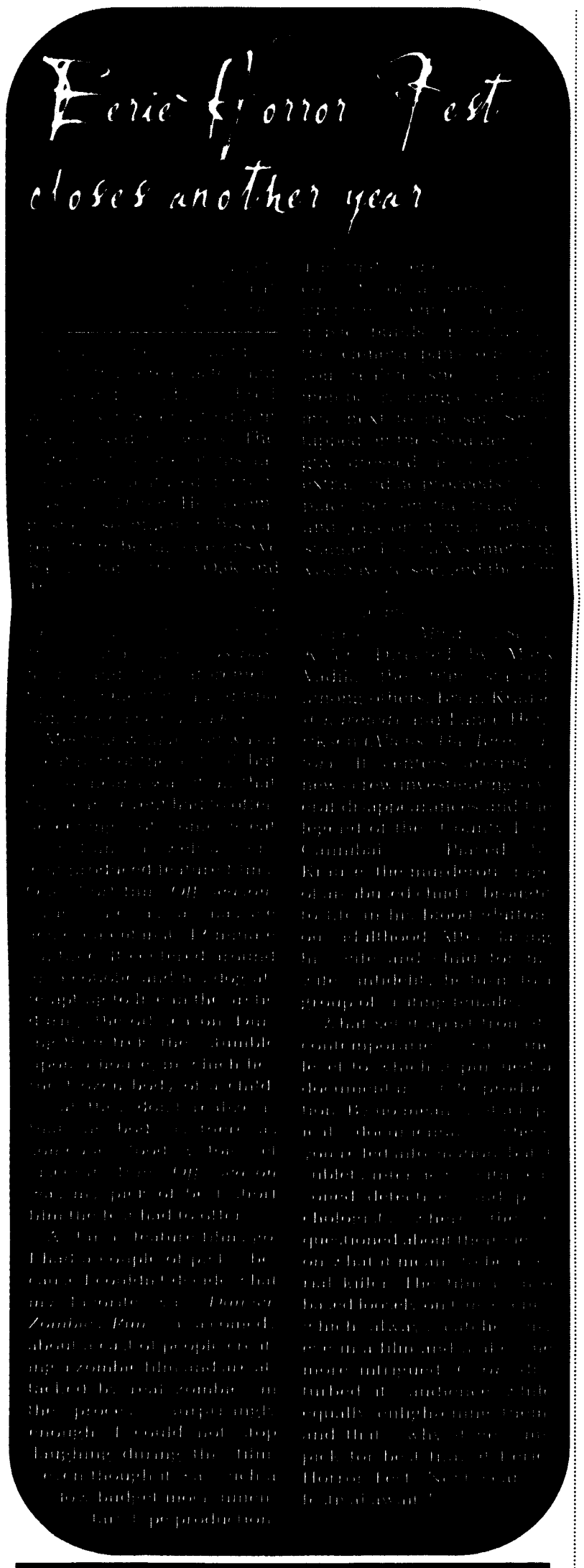
With his films, Steensland wants the story to be the focus. "I want my audience to be fooled, to be taken in."

"This is going to get really tired really fast, but...if you take the witches out of Macbeth or the ghost out of Hamlet, you don't have a story left and I think there's this idea that horror films or horror stories are only one certain kind of thing," Steensland said. "If you really look at a lot of great, great stories...at their heart are horror tales."

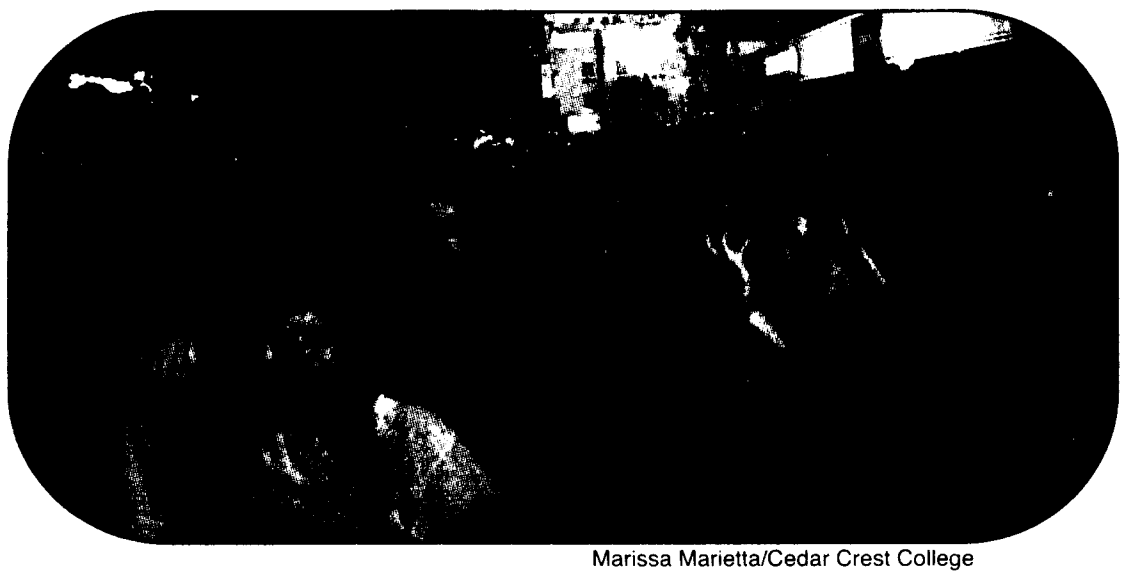
Editor's note:

The worst horror film that Steensland has ever seen is *Blood Freak*.

Steensland said, "It is considered, I think, one of the only pro-Christian horror movies and it features a turkey monster. It is, it is really something else. 'For those who think they've seen everything, comes Blood Freak, a rampaging turkey monster on a marijuana high.' Yeah, it's unbelievable."



Pittsburgh Zombie Walk Breaks World Record



Marissa Marietta/Cedar Crest College

SAMANTHA VERTOSICK
staff writer

Pittsburgh is known for many things such as the Steelers, the Penguins, its bridges, and *Mr. Rodger's Neighborhood*. Now, Pittsburgh can add a zombie related Guinness World Record to that ever-growing list.

On Oct. 10, Pittsburgh hosted the 2010 Zombie Fest and Walk in Market Square. The event got so much attention that Pittsburgh's mayor, Luke Ravenstahl, declared the day 'World Zombie Day.' Every year, each zombie is encouraged to bring at least one canned food item in order to support the local food bank, so the event is for a good cause.

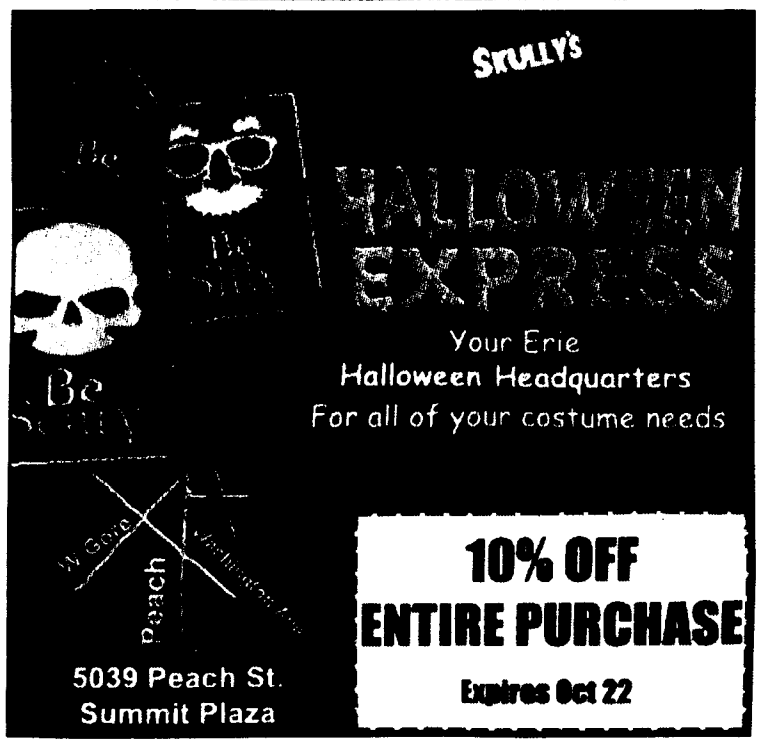
The festival celebrates all things scary and even has vendors selling horror themed items such as jewelry, clothes, food, and other miscellaneous goods. The event starts with an opening ceremony and rock bands take the stage all day until the actual walk. In between the bands are fun zombie-themed events that anyone can compete in.

First, there is a brain-eating contest where zombies must use their mouths only, in a race to finish a life-sized gelatin brain. Other events include the 'Scream-Off', the 'Zombie Olympics', and the famous 'Ugly Pageant' that crowns the zombie king and queen of that year.

Zombie costumes are one of the biggest highlights of the event since many of the participants spend a lot of time and thought on their costume. At this year's festival, there was a zombie Cleopatra, Carrie, a Teletubby, the Bedtime Care Bear, Bert from *Sesame Street* and even Batman's Joker among many other recognizable undead costumes.

One of the main goals of this year's walk was to beat Seattle's World Record for 'Most Zombies Gathered in One Place.' Last year, Seattle beat Pittsburgh's record with approximately 4,200 zombies in attendance, but Pittsburgh earned the title back with around 4,700 zombies at this year's walk.

Next year, the event is expected to be even larger since it has been growing at a rapid rate. One of the organizers of the walk, the band Deathmobile, also announced that next year they will be having a fireworks show in addition to the walk. Next year, gear up in a gory outfit to be a part of another Guinness World Record and prepare for an even bigger Zombie Fest 2011.



STATE COLLEGE HOUSING

meridian
814-231-8000
446 E. College Ave., State College PA

Don't Delay
Get Yours Today!

- Awesome Apartments located in the midst of local Restaurants, Nightlife, Shopping & Entertainment!!
- Closest Apartment Complex to Beaver Stadium!!!!
- Spacious, Furnished, Carpeted
- Air Conditioning in EVERY room
- On-site laundry, FREE cable
- Efficiency, 1 & 2 bedroom floor plans
- 200+ Reserved Parking Spaces Available
- 24 Hour Emergency Maintenance Service
- On-site Professional Management

Calder Commons
814-238-3456
330 E. Calder Way, State College, PA 16801

Get it All this Fall!

- Fantastic Location!
- Only 1/2 a block to PSU Main Campus
- Spacious, Furnished, Carpeted & Air Conditioned
- On-site Study Lounge & Fitness Center
- Free Cable TV
- On-Site Laundry Facilities
- Study lounge (with FREE Internet)
- Covered Parking Available
- On-site Professional Management that Cares

Now Leasing 2011-2012! Sign Your Lease TODAY! Ask how to win Free Rent!