

Eye on Campus

Everyone's psyched for THON weekend

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It's that time of year again.

Every year, University Park hosts a 48-hour dance marathon – THON, to its friends – to raise money for kids with cancer. The event is being held Feb. 20-22 in Rec. Hall. The theme is "Always believing."

This year, Delco's chapter of THON is expecting great things.

THON has been working all year to raise money. The members participated in numerous events already.

One such event is "canning," in which members stand out in the cold all weekend to collect donations from passing cars. You've probably seen the members at various intersections and businesses in the area. Their last can-

ning effort before the trip to University Park will be this weekend.

Canning isn't the only method that Delco THON uses to raise money. Throughout the year, the members contact businesses to get donations and hold events here on campus.

THON holds a Halloween dance every year, an event which always has a great turnout. THON also receives all the money raised from the Geological Times event held by Dr. Laura Guertin. This year, that event is today.

Another huge event is the annual faculty luncheon and silent auction, which is set for Thursday. For the past few weeks, people have been able to bid for amazing "prizes," such as Eagles and Phillies sports packages, lunch for two at the Mendenhall Inn, paintings of Penn State landmarks,

and Penn State memorabilia. Last year, the silent auction raised \$2000. This year, THON wants to double that, and they're off to a good start.

THON has also made great strides in improving its organization. This is the first year in which THON took part in the Adopt-a-Family program. This program allows Delco to sponsor a Four Diamonds family directly and not just raise money for the whole foundation. This year, Delco sponsored Ellen, age 24, who recently relapsed. THON's very excited to be able to help out.

THON is also excited about being able to send four representatives to University Park for the first time. These four "dancers" have a lot to do to prepare for the grueling 48-hour marathon. One of these preparations was the retreat weekend Jan. 30-Feb.

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The weekend is designed to get the dancers motivated, and let them know what to expect.

Delco THON's co-chair, Ed Rich, says that this year is a milestone in many ways for the organization. THON doubled membership at Delco this year, and already exceeded last year's total money raised. As of Jan. 30, THON had raised \$11,174. The goal \$15,000. With another canning weekend, the silent auction and non-stop fund-raising, THON is very optimistic about reaching their goal.

THON urges everyone to go to University Park next weekend to cheer on the dancers and support the kids.

To learn more about THON, visit the Delco THON Web site, www.delcothon.org, or visit the main THON page at www.thon.org.

CLASS OF THE MONTH

'Dinosaurs to now,' a look at Earth

By JEFF HUBER
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Geoscience 021, Biodiversity and Earth History is the class of the month. Biodiversity and Earth History, also known as Earth and Life, is a three-credit course falling under natural sciences in general education. It is being taught by Dr. Laura Guertin.

"This course (Earth and Life) reviews the past 4.6 billion years of Earth's history and focuses on subjects students have heard of but may not be too familiar with," says Guertin.

The class will "discuss dinosaurs, woolly mammoths, the changing continents over time, and current issues of biodiversity and conservation," Guertin continued.

The class was in high demand this semester, offered in two sections each with 24 students. Seats were filled long before the start of the Spring classes. Not surprising, the reaction of students in the class were positive.

When asked, "Why did you take Geoscience 021?" Alana Colangelo, HDFS, replied, "I thought it would be interesting."

Brad Wiggins, a Business Administration major replied, "I wanted to be educated in Geoscience."

After being asked, "What do you think about the class? The

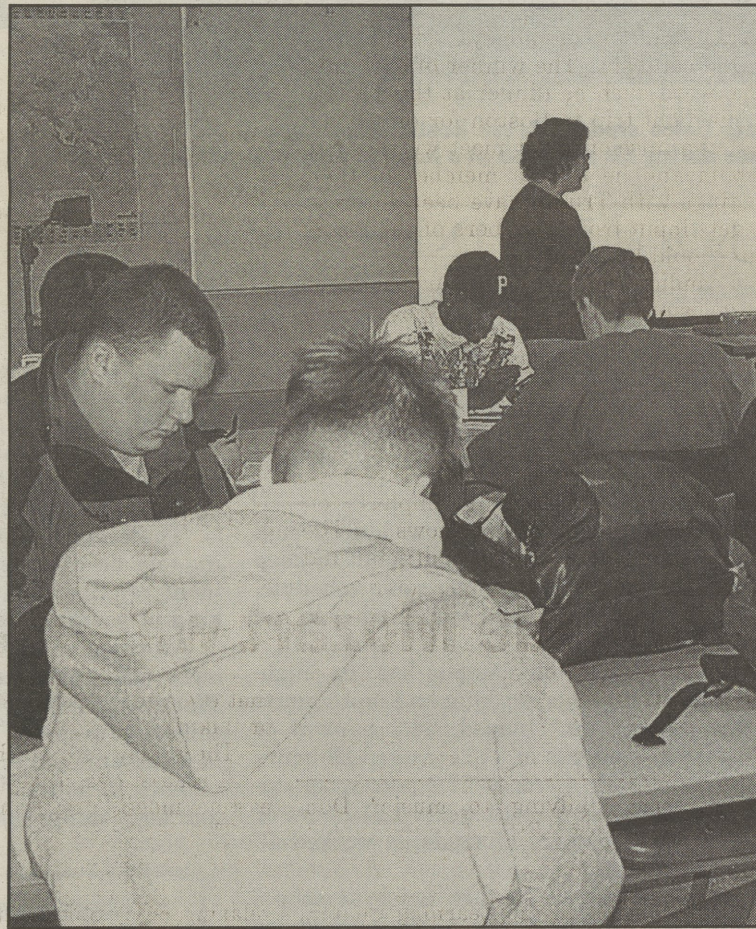


Photo by Antea Consorto
Dr. Laura Guertin instructs one of her biodiversity and earth sciences, which covers '4.6 billion years of Earth history.'

material?" Colangelo replied, "I think it's good, I think the teacher is really nice," Colangelo continued to say "I like the different projects that we do."

Slated for students in the class later in the semester is a service project called Absolutely Incredible Kid Day. For the project students in the class will research endangered and extinct species in order to reinterpret the information in a creative letter to a child, serving the dual

purpose of educating writer and recipient.

"AIKD is a national celebration of writing letters to kids to give them some extra encouragement, that "pat on the back" to let them know they are special and that someone is supporting them towards their future goals," says Guertin, who also noted, "With the crazy and hectic schedules we all keep today, it isn't always easy to find time to volunteer and help others."

GUEST COLUMN

Young, 'mature' ... everyone makes PSU Delco enjoyable

By JANICE KUEHN
Lion's Eye Guest Columnist

Let me introduce myself: I am an "adult student" at Penn State Delco; this is my second semester on campus and I am an English major.

After shepherding four children through the college process, I decided to come back to school myself. The response from my kids was a resounding "Go Mom!" The response from my husband was: "That's great. What's for dinner?"

I just want to say a few words on my perspective on the Penn State educational experience. On my way to school the first day, I prayed that I would not be the only person in the room who was alive when John Kennedy was killed. I negotiated my way into the already-crowded parking lot and parked between the yellow lines, (oops!) then went to the wrong building (dang!) then finally homed in on my classroom.

I peeked in from the hallway, and eureka!, There was another "mature student!" I sat myself down next to this potential ally and cautiously glanced about. I noticed something rather amazing: None of the young people was batting an eye! Of course, some of them were still half asleep. As students drifted into the classroom, I overheard snatches of conversation, such as: "Boy, I had to drag myself out of bed for this class!" "Me too! But this is my only really early class, thank God!" I looked at my watch; yep, it was still 9:30. That's early?

Its been a pleasure getting to know my fellow students. I've found that despite the age difference, I share some things in common with other Penn State students: A love of learning, a need to experience the classroom environment, and the desire to achieve a degree that will be honored in the real world.

I received tremendous support from the admissions department during the application process, my academic advisor couldn't be more helpful, and the folks in the library are constantly going to great lengths to help me with research, etc.

Without exception, my professors have been learned, kind and endlessly patient. I even forgot my E-Lion password, and the technical folks sorted it out that same day. (By the way, I strongly recommend that you write your password down somewhere!)

Penn state not only provides a quality education, more importantly, each student is made to feel welcomed and worthy.

Go Lions!