

Eye on Campus

THON Continued from page 1

Students from Penn State Brandywine were not the only ones who traveled to State College to support the dancers and experience THON weekend. Assistant Director of Student Affairs, Ronika Money, Director of Marketing and University Relations, Helene Bludman, Director of Student Affairs, Dr. Matthew Shupp, Student Affairs Grad Intern, Lauren Jerla and Chancellor, Dr. Sophia Wisniewska also joined the students in the stands, cheered on the dancers and celebrated the lives of the children of the Four Diamonds Fund. "The energy and dedication of our students is what stands out most for me," Bludman said. The energy that Brandywine students had was unmatched as they held up signs that spelled, "B-WINE", sang, and did synchronized dances in the stands.

As the weekend continued, it was apparent that everyone, especially the dancers were fatigued and exhausted. Early Sunday morning, THON Morale Committees helped distribute thousands of letters and packages to dancers during Dancer Mail Call. Receiving mail serves as a way to keep the dancers motivated and inspired to keep on dancing despite their hurting bodies and feeling tired. Dancers on the floor smiled, laughed and cried as they read mail from friends, professors, family and even Penn State Alumni that they did not know.

The weekend was almost over and most dancers were struggling to stay awake, but continued to fight through the pain they were feeling. "My motivation for the weekend was definitely the kids," Rasley said. "But my biggest motivation was to help find a cure so that people wouldn't have to lose loved ones to cancer like I did," she continued, after talking about her experience of losing her grandfather to cancer.

Even though most dancers did not know what the time was, they knew THON weekend was coming to an end as the stands began to fill and the excitement of the people had become even stronger. The BJC reached capacity and closed its doors around 10 a.m. Sunday. The event would not end until approximately 4:30 p.m. During the final hours of the Dance Marathon, Four Diamonds families were invited to speak about their children that unfortunately passed away to cancer, during THON's Family Hour.

One speaker was Kevin Rupp, father of Felicia Rupp who had brain cancer; she went into remission and was diagnosed five years later with leukemia. Rupp stood on the stage with his family and told dancers, students, and supporters of his daughter how she fought 'til the very end.

There wasn't a dry eye in the BJC as Rupp continued to speak. "I want you to THON. I want you to do this because I don't want you to ever have your child die in your arms," Rupp said. This was just one of many stories of children who ended their race. The story of Felicia Rupp kept dancers motivated and was that push they needed to continue dancing for the final hours of the weekend. Dancers and supporters had help staying energized and excited as, "Go Go Gadget," a band that has performed at THON in previous years, rocked the stage singing their biggest hits and also performing a song close to every Penn Stater's heart - Zombie Nation. "Go Go Gadget" left the stage around 3:30 p.m. and students, faculty, staff, families, and supporters rocked out to DJ Larry Moore's final selection of songs which included Livin' On A Prayer, Don't Stop Believin' and David Guetta's When Love Takes Over. People in the stands and dancers on the floor participated in the THON 2011 line dance one last time and at 4 p.m. dancers were invited to sit down. The dance marathon had come to an end.

It was time for the total reveal, but not before recognizing the organizations that raised the most in their category. \$619,631.19 was raised by independent dancers, Penn State Altoona raised the most out of the commonwealth campuses with an amazing \$89,728.84, Atlas THON raised \$381,884.97 and had the first place position in the special interest groups category, the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences got first place in the general organizations category with \$85,955.02 and Zeta Tau Alpha and Alpha Tau Omega claimed first place in the Greek organizations category with \$327,786.51.

Every person in the BJC stood as the THON 2011 Overall Committee prepared to reveal the total. Excitement and anxiety filled every seat, as Kirsten Kelly, THON 2011 Overall Chairwoman announced the total. "I expected \$8 million. Not this!" Gill said. The THON 2011 total was an astounding \$9,563,016.09, \$1.7 million more than what was raised last year. The stands in the BJC shook as the total was revealed. No one could believe the numbers that were before them, but were more than happy and pleased that their efforts went so far. The THON 2011 theme, "Together Without Limits", seemed to be true as THON members and supporters proved that there are no limits when raising money for the fight against pediatric cancer.

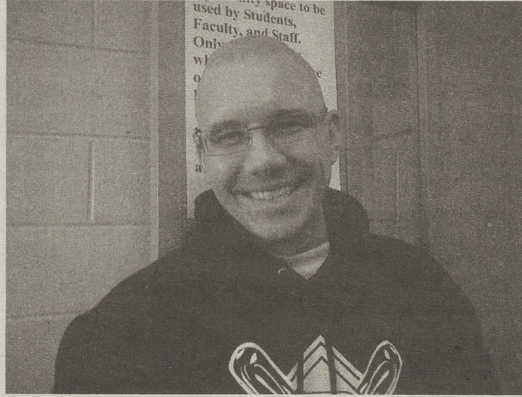
Chancellor Wisniewska said, "Of all the wonderful Penn State events that I attended, this was one of the most thrilling, inspiring, and fun. It touched my heart to see the good that people do, especially our young people. The amount of time, support, and money that our students bring to this great cause is unmatched." She congratulated all Penn State students and specifically her students on a job well done.

Both Cicala and Rasley said that if given the chance, they would both dance for 46 hours again. Cicala continued, "When the total amount was revealed and Tucker Haas [Four Diamonds Fund child] got excited, started crying and hugged members of THON, I felt really proud because I was a part of helping the kids. I was making a difference."

THON weekend was a success and the countdown to THON 2012 has officially begun!

THON Nets Serious Cash For Shupp's Curls

By Kait McDyre- Lion's Eye Staff Writer- kmm5356@psu.edu



Director of Student Affairs, Matthew Shupp, graciously donated his hair to THON in their last push for fundraising during THON Spirit Week. Shupp's hair gave the organization over \$700 toward their overall total. (photo by Brittney Walker)

Director of Student Affairs Matthew Shupp shaved his shoulder-length hair to raise money for THON on Tuesday February 15. The Cash for Curls event was held in the Lion's Den during common hour on Tuesday.

Shupp agreed to shave his hair and donate it to Locks of Love, a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to children in the United States and Canada under age 21, who suffer from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis, if the campus raised \$600 or more for the event. In the two weeks prior to the event, collection jars were passed around campus to collect money to either "Save it" or "Shave it." Students and faculty members were encouraged to donate to one jar or the other. All proceeds were donated directly to the Penn State Brandywine THON.

When asked about the event, Shupp said, "I was thrilled to help out when THON approached me with the idea. I had no idea that people would pay so much money to have me cut my hair! Although most people on campus (when they finally recognize me!) give me a 'thumbs up' with approval on the new 'look.' Last year they made a sundae out of me. This year they cut my hair. Who knows what they'll ask me to do next year. Either way, if they ask me to help out next year, I'm game."

Students gathered in the Lion's Den seemed to be very interested in this particular event. There was a buzz around campus in the week and a half leading up to the event as to

whether or not he would shave his head. The event took place during the THON spirit week, February 14-18 on campus. The Spirit Week consisted of events that hoped to raise money in the last few days before the THON event at University Park. Also included in this spirit week was a spaghetti dinner and silent auction.

Shupp said that he started growing his hair when he was training for his first marathon. After running the marathon, he simply never cut his hair and before he knew it, it had grown to his shoulders.

Penn State student, Lauren Purcell said, "I think this is such a great thing that he is doing. For someone to shave their hair completely takes a lot of courage and guts. It's such a drastic change and it's rare to find someone willing to do something like that. But there is absolutely no better cause out there."

Penn State's IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon or THON, is the largest student run philanthropy in the world. It is a yearlong effort to raise money and awareness for the fight against childhood cancer. The money raised for THON goes to the Four Diamonds Fund which helps families with children suffering from cancer.

This year, THON was held on February 18-20, in the Bryce Jordan Center at University Park. Each year, THON continues to grow and raise more money for their efforts. This year, they raised \$9.56 million.

Knittany Lion Needleworks Help "Caps for Good"

By Justin Carrington- Special To The Lion's Eye

Penn State Brandywine Knittany Lion Needleworks volunteers picked up their crochet hooks and participated in Save the Children's "Caps for Good" campaign, which provides aid to four million newborn babies in poor countries who receive insufficient medical care. The group made 492 newborn caps, surpassing its previous record of 311 in 2008.

"We are thrilled with the increasing number of donations each time we work with Save the Children," said Laura Guertin, co-chair of Knittany Lion Needleworks and associate professor of earth and mineral sciences at the campus.

Sophomore Eileen Fresta, a Schreyer Honors Scholar, made 50 of the 492 newborn caps.

"It seemed amazing that something that took so little of my time could potentially have such an enormous impact somewhere else in the world," she said.

In addition, several residents at Granite Farms Estates also participated in the "Caps for Good" campaign, knitting a majority of the caps.

Guertin is nominating Knittany Lion Needleworks for the campus' Diane D. Shorter Outstanding Community Service Award, which recognizes organizations that contribute to the spirit of civic engagement through raising aware-



ness of and enlisting campus involvement toward supporting a cause. Guertin believes the organization unifies faculty, staff, students, alumni and even those with no previous connection with the University.

"We need to remember what it means to be Penn State," she said. "We Are Penn State" means that we are a land-grant institution that has a mission to serve the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and beyond."

In March, Knittany Lion Needleworks will join the Schreyer Honors Program at Penn State Brandywine in its attempt to raise awareness about human trafficking and slavery. The group will create blue and white scarves for survivors of human trafficking and slavery.

"I am looking forward to Dr. Guertin's next project for the Knittany Needleworkers," Fresta said.

For more details on upcoming events, visit the Knittany Lion Needleworks blog: <http://tinyurl.com/knittanylionneedleworks/> online.