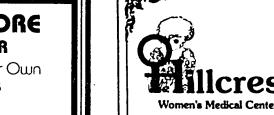


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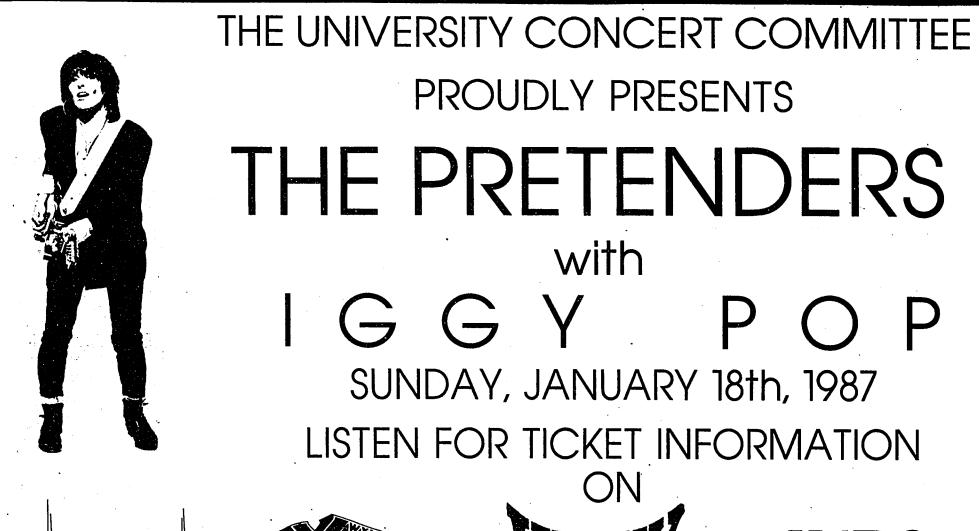
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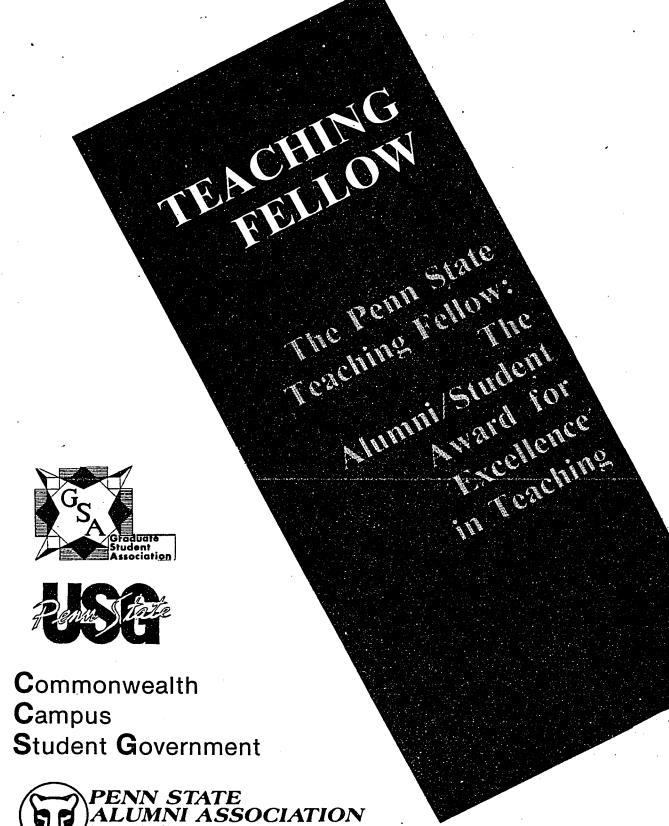








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arts

Dickens is Lentz's lifelong interest

Growing up in the small North Carolina town of after a year-long stint as a newspaper reporter. about it is that people become less participatory Stony Point, Tony Lentz had dreams of "After being a full-time journalist, going to anchoring the nightly news. But lately, he has school was easy," he said. Lentz completed his said. been following in the footsteps of Charles Dick- master's degree and went on to the University of ens rather than those of Walter Cronkite. Lentz will be putting his skills to work and his In 1978, while teaching at Wingate College, tuxedo on for his traditional one-man reading of Lentz bought a copy of Dickens' classic Dickens' A Christmas Carol at 7:30 tonight and Christmas story and started to mark it up and tomorrow night at the Nittany Lion Inn Fireside type it out in preparation for his first reading. Lounge, sponsored by the Department of Speech The big night came and only 10 people showed Communication. Admission is free and there will up, including an old man and his wife who thought they were going to see a play. They

University of North Carolina, tackling a double didn't do a lot for Lentz' self-confidence. was first exposed to what would become become speech communication department had spon- still use the movements today," he said. his trademark — an oral reading of Dickens' A sored readings of A Christmas Carol in the 1940s "One of my career goals is to find some way to Christmas Carol. "I was a green country kid in and '50s. With support from the department, talk about performance," he said. "How do we the big city," Lentz said. "I just dropped in to see Lentz reserved 121 Kern Building, "a place with move to keep an audience's attention? Aren't

university. Lentz came back every year to listen have to bring their imaginations along.

he said. "I knew I wanted to do that — to make that's all they see. They're lost.

oral reading." That interest carried over to graduate school, short range views of the world. The worst thing

Michigan to complete his doctorate.

the corner, this old guy walked up and started for the University. reading. And bingo! What do you know, I saw it." The setting for this event has moved from Kern

Dickens' Christmas story had come to life in to the Nittany Lion Inn; and the audience has the University Readers use to get audiences gotten bigger and bigger every year, he said. The involved in the literature they read. "It gets the That old man who read and affected Lentz so audience has also become accustomed to the fact audience to sympathize with someone else, to

to Wynn's reading; and Wynn ultimately went to This isn't always the easiest thing to do. In an lose the ability to abstract ourselves, to comprosee Lentz read Mark Twain. Later the two age dominated by film and video, where all the mise . . . that sense of compromise is what performed together in Fiddler On The Roof. "We images and emotions are supplied for them, makes democracy work." had a mutual admiration thing going," Lentz people have a hard time using their imaginations, Lentz said. "When a person who's trained 13 at the Gamble Mill in Bellefonte, sponsored by "I knew the power of (Wynn's) performance," like that goes to look at a black mark on a page, the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Associa-

and video. We're left with concrete imagery and They just sit and receive what is presented," he

Lentz' interests in the field of speech commu nication extend beyond the effects of modern day video culture on literacy. He's fascinated by the history of oral tradition, how communication changed when writing was introduced and speech performance. "I'm interested in the nuts

An assistant professor of speech communica- walked in, sat down, took a look at Lentz alone on He cited a valiant but misdirected attempt in tion, Lentz began his academic career at the the stage and promptly got up and left. This the 1800s to document and standardize the vamajor in speech and journalism in the hopes of When Lentz came to the University seven meaning while speaking. He pulled an old, musty becoming a television anchorman. "I enjoyed the years ago, he took over as advisor to the Univerbook from his shelf that showed sketches of sense of age on the campus — that there was a sity Readers, a group that does three or four oral people in 19th-century dress, posed in the most long tradition of education behind it," he said. readings a semester. While looking into the dramatic fashion. They even went so far as to It was in his freshman year at UNC that Lentz history of the Readers, Lentz found out that the choreograph speeches. "A lot of dance people

it. I have vivid memories of it. A brass band in nice acoustics," and did his first Dickens reading there some basic principles we can get across to

profoundly was Earl Wynn, a professor at the that when they come to hear him read, they also think about someone else's problems," he explained. "I remain concerned about that. If we

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