

Event draws talents

By Amanda Elser and Renee Gulda
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Musicians, comedians, dancers, jugglers and even a dove graced the stage at the HUB-Robeson Center Auditorium on Wednesday night when the Penn State Marketing Association (PSMA) presented its 2009 Fall Talent Fusion.

Ten acts performed to raise money for the PSMA. The club's goal was to host a talent show that offered more talent than just singers. Jennifer Bain, one of the three coordinators of the event, said that planning started in mid-September for Wednesday night's "Talent Fusion."

"We really wanted to do more — that's why we had things like comedy and juggling," Bain (junior-marketing) said.

"Local celebrities" Mike Herr, also known as Mike the Mailman, Brawny Bruzgo from the Real World and Ashley Hinson from the Lionettes were called upon as talent aficionados for last night's performances. Herr said he was looking forward to the talent and excited to see some enthusiasm from Penn State students.



Alexis Simchak/Collegian

Nate Kepner, left (senior-education) and Joe Scholz (graduate-engineering science and mechanics) juggle at the PSMA Talent Show in the HUB Auditorium on Wednesday evening. Kepner and Scholz took first place at the show.

Hinson (sophomore-broadcast journalism) said she was looking for a winner that would light up the stage with energy and confidence.

"If someone doesn't eat a flaming squirrel, I might leave," Bruzgo (senior-history) announced to the audience.

No one ate a squirrel, but magician act "Nate and Joe" did produce a dove from thin air and followed it up with a juggling number that clinched them the No. 1 spot for the evening.

A small but enthused crowd came out to support the local talent. Ryan Caler (senior-business management) said he came out

for the entertainment and to support his friends.

Other acts included Maura Westerlund, who performed "One Sweet Love" on the piano.

"I love performing and will look for every opportunity to get up on stage," Westerlund (freshman-communications) said.

The crowd didn't respond as enthusiastically to all the acts. "Second Floor Standup" comedian Michael Lewis silenced the audience with his sexual jokes.

"I hope you all enjoyed that break from the talent," he said with a chuckle.

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Humanitarian talks Rwanda

By Laurie Stern
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

It didn't matter that the back window was shot out of his car or that militiamen threatened to kill him. Carl Wilkens said he stayed because "I had a sense I was making a difference."

Wilkens, the only American to remain in Kigali, Rwanda after the 1994 genocide began, spoke to a group of about 70 people Wednesday evening in the Chambers Building. The lecture, which was sponsored by the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences and the Rock Ethics Institute, included anecdotes of his time spent in the country during violent instability and described some of the inspiring people he encountered.

At the age of 33, Wilkens traveled to Rwanda with his family as part of a church group that hoped to carry out humanitarian work. He was there for four years when the genocide started, but instead of fleeing as most foreigners did, Wilkens remained in the city of Kigali to help children at a local orphanage. He recounted a story where the children had no drinking water, and the only way for him to obtain any was to drive to a faucet down the road. The only

problem: It was heavily guarded by snipers who were ready and willing to use their machine guns on any trespassers.

"There were some days you didn't want to go forward," Wilkens said. "These kids were [a] huge inspiration."

Wilkens is the founder of World Outside My Shoes, a non-profit educational and professional development organization that encourages people to "enter the world of the other," by promoting acceptance of all people and their differences.

Meryn Oswald heard Wilkens speak at Penn State in March as well and was immediately inspired to create an on-campus branch of the organization. Oswald said the student group has two goals: to complete community service at home as well as abroad. She said members plan on participating in local food drives and mentoring programs and are hoping to raise enough money to have a Rwandan orphanage repainted.

"I was really moved by his story. It really stuck with me and I felt like I had to do something," Oswald (sophomore-French and English) said.

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Theatre men compete for title

By Matthew D'Ippolito
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Six men in the School of Theatre revealed their hidden talents when they competed for the title of Mr. School of Theatre on Wednesday night.

Each contestant strutted down a makeshift red carpet in the Arts Building wearing a variety of swimsuits or, in one case, pants.

Contestants sported such swimwear as briefs covered in whipped cream and a sailor's cap, swim trunks and a leopard-print Speedo. Tim Heartman (sophomore-theatre) even used the red carpet as a cape before running off stage with it.

Audience members were encouraged to place donations into the can of their favorite con-

testant. The contestant who raised the most funds at the end of the night was declared the winner. All proceeds from the competition will benefit the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (Thon).

The talent portion began with Eric Lawry (senior-theatre) singing and playing guitar as he rolled around in an office chair.

"Oh, did I mention? This is a song for the ladies," he said, eliciting an "aw" from the audience.

Other talents included painting while doing yoga, freestyle rapping and a battle with a band of ninjas heckling Heartman from the back of the room.

The competition concluded with the contestants answering questions from the all-female panel of judges, though the answers were



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sometimes bizarre and unrelated.

Andy Haig (junior-theatre), who was told to do a celebrity impersonation, walked up to his questioner, pulled a condom from his sleeve and threw it at her. When asked whom he was impersonating, he responded with, "Sorry, I missed the question."

The competition ended in a tie between Lawry and Haig. To decide a winner, the two engaged in a dance-off while audience members chanted the name of their preferred contestant.

While Haig gave his best effort, even pouring Diet Pepsi over his face, Lawry's antics, including



Marissa Gutherz/Collegian

Andy Haig (junior-theatre) woos the panel of judges during the interview session. Haig proceeded to pull a condom out of his sleeve.

crawling across the judges' table on all fours, led to his victory.

Steph Smith (senior-marketing) supported Haig, who is her friend. "The leopard print was the

clinch," she said. "And who else poured Pepsi on themselves? He really went whole hog."

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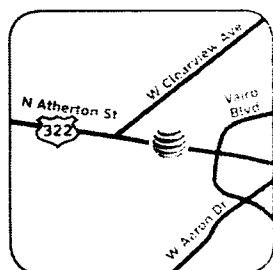


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