

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fraternities' hearings continued, waived

Three Penn State fraternities were scheduled for preliminary hearings in connection with furnishing alcohol to minors Thursday, court officials said.

Beta Sigma Beta fraternity's preliminary hearing was continued Thursday and will take place next Wednesday, court officials said.

Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity's preliminary court hearing was continued and will be held next week, court officials said.

Sigma Nu fraternity waived its hearing in court Wednesday and will go straight to the pre-trial conference, court officials said.

ON THE WEB

To read these articles and more, visit psu.collegian.com.

Black panelists talk about leadership

When Kimberly Griffin was a student, her role model was Kimberly Reese. She was a black teenager on the then-popular television show "A Different World," who was cool, had friends, and whom boys liked.

Today, Griffin is an assistant professor and research associate who wants to set an example for Penn State's black community.

Homelessness panel educates students

While many Penn State students decide which apartment building to live in, some students learn that others in Centre County are struggling to find a place to live at all.

Campers could get free basketball ticket

Penn State students who participated in Paternoville during any game this season will be able to purchase a ticket for tonight's men's basketball season opener and receive a second ticket free through a special promotion.

Magazine, fraternity hold date auction

With Lady Gaga's "Paparazzi" booming in the background, Diana Rodriguez (junior-psychology and journalism) strutted around the small stage in a classroom where students typically expect to see a professor teaching.

Instead, about 15 students were auctioned off Thursday night in 102 Thomas for Fly Magazine and Delta Lambda Phi's Date Auction.

Asylum hosts Thanksgiving Throwdown

If Penn State students are ready to "throw down," this Saturday's Thanksgiving Throwdown show may just be the perfect opportunity to do so.

Pennharmonics to perform at Forum

For proof that it's entirely possible to sound like a full band without using a single instrument, look no further than The Pennharmonics, a co-ed a cappella group founded at Penn State in 1993.

Acoustic Brew brings Crowfoot to Lemont

Forging together a blend of music from all over the world, Crowfoot is now adding State College to its list of stops across the globe. The Acoustic Brew Concert series will bring a mix of Celtic, British and Appalachian music tonight at the Center For Well Being, 123 Mt. Nittany Road, Lemont.

Band to bring mellow music to HUB

In every relationship, there is always the inevitable fight — and hopefully, there's the eventual makeup.

That awkward phone call is the inspiration for the guitar-playing duo performing today at the HUB-Robeson Center at the Student Programming Association (SPA)'s Noontime Concert Series.

Kallope Open Mic draws small crowd

John Mortara read a poem addressed to a murdered loved one in front of a small crowd in the Irving's basement Thursday night.

"This is called, 'Elegy to Punk Rock,'" Mortara (senior-English) said.

Man faces minimum of six months in jail

A man charged with indecently assaulting a woman in a Penn State fraternity house in July 2007 was sentenced to a minimum of six months in jail Tuesday, his attorney said.

Weather: Today: High 53

Weather forecast icons and text: Tonight: Low 43, Tomorrow: High 56, Extended forecast campusweatherservice.com

Lee

From Page 1.

idolizing Michael Jordan was about to make a switch in priorities.

Before, football was just for fun. But as his high school career continued, Lee realized he moved more like a linebacker than a point guard.

Although high school football coach Jim Render was glad Lee was also playing basketball for Upper St. Clair, a high school about 10 miles from Pittsburgh, the coach wanted his player to focus on football.

The competition between university recruiters came to a head when Upper St. Clair traveled to play Bethel Park, one of the school's rivals.

Linebacker coach Ron Vanderlinden came to visit from Penn State. Render remembers how Lions defensive coordinator Tom Bradley was about to offer Lee a scholarship, but he first wanted Vanderlinden to watch the linebacker in person.

Lee played what he considered perhaps the best game of his high school career, starting in all facets of the game.

Performing well on the field was one thing, but impressing one of college football's most legendary coaches is another.

One day like any other, Lee walked into school to find Joe Paterno leaning casually against the wall in the athletic wing.

"I saw him, and the first thing I noticed — he's changed his glasses since then — was how thick his prescription was," Lee said.

It didn't take long for the linebacker to find out just how witty and personal the coach could be.

"He messes around me being Irish and him being Italian," Lee said. "He's made a few cracks on that. But he hasn't done too many jokes toward me."

And Lee tries to return the favor. "I've just tried to do a squeaky voice kind of with a little bit of an accent," Lee said with a laugh.

When the coach talked with Lee for the first time, the conversation went from Lee's grandfather to the coach's past in Brooklyn.

But make no mistake about it, the talk quickly came down to business.

"He said, 'So you considering coming to Penn State or what?'" Lee said. "And I wasn't going to say no to him. So he had me on the spot like that."

Regardless, Penn State wasn't a slam dunk.

West Virginia was the first to make an offer to Lee when Rich Rodriguez was its coach. Receiving an early offer from Iowa, Lee took official visits to the schools and said he seriously considered them.

But things got a little easier when Penn State and Iowa squared off in 2004. Lee attended the game and got

to see two coaches in Paterno and Kirk Ferentz, both teaching hard-nosed, fundamental football.

The 6-4 game left both fans and players frustrated, but it's how Lee decided between the two schools. Each team had its own set of top-notch linebackers with the Hawkeyes' Abdul Hodge and Chad Greenway opposing Penn State's Posluszny and the then-freshman Connor.

"What it came down to was I saw some of the guys like Paul and Dan, and I thought I was similar to and wanted to play like them," Lee said. "And a lot of it came down to distance."

Battling Back

Everything was going well for Lee in his Penn State career until one fateful April day.

He was about to enter the 2008 season after he posted 90 tackles in 2006 and pushed a season total up to 138 in 2007, finishing second in the Big Ten in tackles behind only Connor.

Penn State was also coming off an Alamo Bowl win against Texas A&M, a win Lee thought spearheaded the next season.

But horror struck in spring 2008 when Lee suffered the torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) that caused him to miss the entire year. Lee said he was rushing the quarterback, and when the signal caller moved out of the pocket, the linebacker tried to cut while running at full speed at the same time his leg was coming down.

"I had just slipped a little bit, and it popped," Lee said. "It felt like my knee had dislocated. So I reached down and grabbed it, and it was fine. And I said in my head, 'I tore my ACL.' Not even knowing what it felt like, I said, 'This has to be what it is.'"

This was nothing he had ever experienced before.

In camp his freshman year in 2005, Lee remembers partially tearing his medial collateral ligament (MCL). With all the schoolwork, the rehab and fighting for playing time, Lee admitted he got a little homesick through early fall.

Instead of letting it overwhelm him, Lee continued to work hard both on and off the field. He described his first-year approach as keeping his head down, shutting his mouth and working hard.

The difference was that the MCL injury wasn't a definitive season destroyer, but the ACL was.

"An injury like that, it's black and white," Lee said about his ACL injury. "You know you're done for the season. You know you have a long rehab. You're in tears thinking you put all this work in."

Still, Lee persevered. He had a choice: act as a coach and help the fellow linebackers or completely remove himself from the team.

Lee chose to be on the sidelines. Although he sometimes had a strong urge to just go out there and help make a play, he made sure to remain active solely on the sidelines.

"To be honest, I figured Sean

would drive everybody nuts," Render said. "I didn't think he could get into the coaching role that he was given. I thought he'd be pacing the sidelines like a wild man."

Forget about coming back and being the same. As time passed, Lee came to believe he would return even better than before.

In the gym, Lee faced a long rehab process for an injury he'd never experienced to that extent before.

Lee returned against Akron this September and ranks second on the team with 63 tackles this season, despite missing three games with minor injuries.

"With any adversity, you find the positives and run with it," Lee said.

Looking forward

A native of the Pittsburgh area, it comes as no surprise that Lee's dream is to continue his football career with the Steelers.

Lee fondly remembers 1996, when the Steelers lost to the Cowboys in the Super Bowl. Despite the defeat, Lee idolized Pro-Bowl linebackers Greg Lloyd and Kevin Greene. For him, they were the perfect example of tough blue-collar defenders.

But he doesn't take anything for granted — simply playing in the NFL would be a dream come true, he said.

There are two regular season games and a bowl game left before Lee forever hangs up the no-named, white-heavy Penn State jersey — plainness he thinks makes the uniforms intimidating — but the pros are taking notice.

In fact, Render said he got a letter from the Oakland Raiders earlier this week, asking him about Lee.

Was he late to class? Is he a good person?

No hesitation from the coach. "You're going to get a quality football player both on the field and off the field," Render said. "I would think the National Football League — that's the kind of guy they really want."

Football remains Lee's passion. But any player's professional football career could best be described as a trip into the unknown. Even so, Lee can see himself staying in the game even after he hangs up the pads for good.

"Some of me said, 'I definitely want to stay in it after I'm done playing,' but you can't say that for sure," Lee said.

"I have a finance degree, and I'm very interested in that, and I'm sure as I look more, I could look into a job into that area."

But this weekend is all about rebounding from last weekend's loss to Ohio State, a loss that crushed Rose Bowl hopes — and one final chance to take a piece of Beaver Stadium with him.

"Maybe I'll take some grass off my spikes," Lee said.

"But I'll have so many memories to take with me. Every time I step into that stadium from here on out, I'll probably wish I was playing on the field."

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Redneck

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At the end of his performance, Larry made no excuses for his jokes.

"If you don't think that's funny, then get the hell outta here," he said.

Chevus Turner (junior-natural

gas engineering) said this was his second Larry the Cable Guy show.

"He tells it like it is," he said.

Nicole Kusko (sophomore-animal sciences) came out with a group of her friends for her first ever Larry the Cable Guy performance.

"We like him because we're a bunch of rednecks," she said.

Kusko really appreciated the tailgate party theme.

"It's especially good for Penn State," she said. "It's a staple. And he is an American staple."

Dustin Wolford, from Lock Haven, made the trip out to State College just for Thursday night's show.

As he fixed the brim on his camo baseball hat, he said, "I like him 'cause he's funny, I guess."

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Lions

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Lee and Odrick are among the notable seniors playing their final home game.

"I know the fans have their favorites," senior walk-on Pat Mauti said. "Sean, Jerome [Hayes], Jared, Daryll. Everybody is a big-time player here. It means the same to everybody."

The fifth-year seniors on this team, including Clark, Lee, Hull and Hayes, came in during the breakthrough 2005 season, when Penn State moved past four losing seasons in five years and went on to win the Big Ten and Orange Bowl.

Others were part of the 2006 recruiting class ranked in the national top-10 by both Scout.com and Rivals.com. Many members of that class, including Pat Devlin,

Chris Bell, Antonio Logan-El and Aaron Maybin, are no longer with the team. The ones who have stuck it out for four years are trying to keep the Nittany Lions' BCS bowl hopes alive.

Coach Joe Paterno said Tuesday he is more concerned with getting his team ready for Indiana than reflecting on the senior class.

"I don't have the luxury to sit around and say, 'Boy, I love so-and-so,'" Paterno said. "We've got a tough job ahead of us this week. We've got to concentrate on the job we've got to get done."

Nevertheless, seniors have played key roles in the Lions' eight wins and have been contributors since early in their careers.

"I feel like it was just yesterday when I started," Quarless said. "It's the last game for me and lots of other seniors, so it's going to mean a whole lot. I was talking to [position]

coach [Bill] Kenney, and he was saying that he's never been here and lost on a Senior Day. So that's what we're looking forward to, and it's going to mean a whole lot."

A run to Pasadena for the national championship or the Rose Bowl was the goal heading into the season. But as the 18 seniors walk off the field for the last time Saturday, they say the bigger picture of their time spent at Penn State will overshadow the short-term disappointment of not repeating as conference champions.

"It's weird because it hasn't hit me," said Clark, who graduated high school in 2004 and enrolled at Penn State in 2005 after a year of prep school. "What a journey it's been. But it will be a lot better if we go out and play hard and win on Saturday and finish our season on an upbeat."

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Funds

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the state will not have a balanced budget without table game revenue.

Conklin thinks if the funds are there, then legislators should consider awarding the appropriations.

"There are those that say 'Yes, we can write this check,'" he said. "I think we should."

Conklin acknowledged that awarding the appropriations could be potentially dangerous, resulting in a \$1 billion shortfall late in the school year.

In a letter to House Appropriations

Chairman Rep. Dwight Evans, D-Philadelphia, Conklin wrote, "It is the parents and students of Penn State and the other affected institutions who will feel the pain of this delay as they look to reorganize their own budgets to pay for their education."

The letter asked for the release of the appropriations.

"We do not want to strain the budgets of families with a virtual extension of the already embarrassing budget impasse," the letter read, referencing the main spending bill in this year's budget that was passed more than 100 days late.

In the letter, Conklin proposed taxing cigars and natural gas in

order to balance the budget and allow the legislature to dispense the appropriations to the state-related schools.

Conklin said he is not sure how much longer the table game debate will last in the general assembly, as legislators and lobbyists from the casino industry spar on the cost of licenses and taxes.

"I would like to be able to contact President Graham Spanier to calm these waters with assurances that the funding will be forthcoming soon and that our Caucus stands with Penn State University," Conklin wrote in the letter to Evans.

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