

# Book signing brings back memories

By Stéfán Orzech  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

When Sam Yasgur was in college, a professor once returned an assignment to him with a pointed comment: "This is replete with repetitive redundancies."

Fortunately, he didn't let that deter him from later authoring a book about his family's significant experience in one of the top musical events in American history.

Yasgur signed copies of his new book, "Max B. Yasgur: The Woodstock Festival's Famous Farmer," which details the life of his well-known father. Saturday afternoon at the Old Main Frame Shop & Gallery, 136 E. College Ave. The event attracted students and State College residents alike.

some who either attended Woodstock or were interested in it.

Yasgur said he wanted to tell the truth about his father, who leased out his land for the music festival, after some "fictionalized versions" have been purported. One of the best parts of book signings is meeting people who attended Woodstock, he said.

"There were people who met there and got married," he said. "People have come up to me in tears and said, 'I remember that moment when your father got up on stage.'"

Yasgur said many teenagers were not relating well to their parents at the time of the festival, which is why it became so important for them to see his father Max. "a 49-year-old Republican

conservative," listening to them.

"Afterwards, people would recognize him on the street — you'd think he was a rock star," he said.

Robert Echard, a resident of State College, reminisced about his own college days, during which he attended the three-day music festival with some friends.

"I was there at Woodstock, and I remember his father," he said. "If I had any three days to live over again, I would pick Woodstock. I really learned to appreciate folk music there."

One student, Amanda Gregor (freshman-immunology and infectious diseases), bought Yasgur's book because 1960s culture is one of her interests.

"I've always felt like I belong in the '60s, kind of like a hippie at

heart," she said. "I'm just interested in '60s music and culture."

Yasgur also pointed out the book's connections to Penn State: He compares Woodstock to a White Out game and has dedicated his work to a current graduate student, Samantha Herrick (graduate-counselor education and supervision). Herrick said she met Yasgur about 10 years ago through a mutual friend. She heard so many stories about Woodstock from him that she pushed him to write about it.

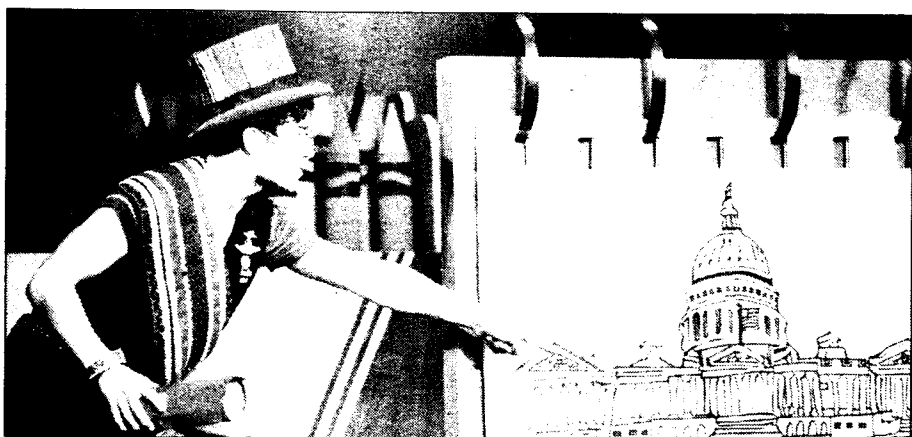
"I told him to have it at least for his kids and grandkids, so they can know Max," she said. "But even for everyone, it provides a depth to a cultural experience."



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Sam Yasgur signs a copy of his book "Max B. Yasgur: The Woodstock Festival's Famous Farmer" on Saturday in the Old Main Frame Shop.

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Chloe Elmer/Collegian

Luke Virkstis (sophomore-musical theatre) explains how a bill becomes a law during the Penn State School of Theatre's production of "School House Rock Live!" on Saturday.

# Arts center boasts eight Grammy-nominated acts

Of the 26 acts chosen for 2009-2010 at the Center for the Performing Arts, eight were nominated for Grammys.

By Renée Gulda  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Although winners have not yet been determined, eight of the 26 acts from Penn State's Center for the Performing Arts' 2009-2010 season have racked up Grammy nominations for the 2010 Grammy Awards.

"It validates that we are meeting the mission of the center to bring world-renowned, high-quality artists to our venues and to Penn State and the greater community," director George Trudeau said.

Béla Fleck is nominated for two Grammys, one for Best Contemporary World Music Album for "Throw Down Your Heart: Tales from the Acoustic Planet, Vol. 3-Africa Sessions" and the other for Best Classical Crossover Album for "The Melody of Rhythm."

Trudeau said Fleck is a standout at CPA, a creative artist who is always doing something new, different and interesting. He follows what Trudeau said the CPA is always looking for, which is to "avoid repetition, provide variety and complete performances one season to the next."

Other artists nominated for Grammys include Stefon Harris and the Julian Lage Group, who are both nominated for their albums in the Best Contemporary Jazz Album Category. Kurt Elling and Roberta

Gambarini are Best Jazz Vocal nominees along with Roy Hargrove and Terence Blanchard, who are both nominated for Best Improvised Jazz Solo. The Emerson String Quartet concludes the nominees with a nomination for Best Chamber Music Performance.

"It hopefully says that we're right on the mark with selecting performances and artists that are considered at the really top of their career," Sullivan said, adding she hopes the nominations will attract larger crowds for upcoming performances.

As for finding talent, looking for artists to come to Penn State is a non-stop process.

Trudeau tries to see artists perform in person whenever possible and is constantly reviewing various artists' work and staying in touch with artist colleagues.

CPA Marketing and Communications Director Laura Sullivan is happy there are more than a few distinguished artists who have visited Penn State this past year.

"We are always on the lookout for those artists that are just starting to peak, and we are also looking at artists who we know already are respected and legendary in their field," she said.

Trudeau said there is a "stake in the game" now that should make future performances more exciting.

"I think people will be considerably excited, particularly for the artists coming up on our season, along with tracking these nominations to see if they actually win an award," he said.

The 52<sup>nd</sup> annual Grammy Awards air from 8 to 11:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31 on CBS.

# Students bring cartoon series to life for young and old alike

By Anita Modi  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Sharing songs about pronouns, multiplication and the solar system, students of the University Resident Theatre Company proved to its audiences that learning can be fun.

"Schoolhouse Rock Live!," based on the Saturday morning cartoon series that aired more than 30 years ago, tells a story of a new teacher named Tom. Though nervous about his first day teaching, he overcomes his fears with the help of a few friends and confidently walks into his classroom at the end of the story.

A musical with 17 numbers, "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" was performed at the State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave., throughout the past week for both elementary school students and adult audiences.

Kristy Cyone, marketing director at the State Theatre, said the theater produced the show primarily as a field trip event for area elementary schools. Funding received from local sponsors covered admission for the students, who only had to pay transportation costs to attend the trip.

"It's fantastic," Cyone said during the performance on Friday. "The kids are having a lot of fun. I can literally hear them from my office."

Elementary school students were not the only ones to enjoy the show — adults who came to the public performances of "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" were given the opportunity to reminisce about the original "Schoolhouse Rock" series. Except for the finale, the songs featured in the production were all taken from the television series.

Christine Schrader, a Bellefonte resident who came to see the show with her two children, said she grew up listening to all of the "Schoolhouse Rock" songs.

"It's great because you were learning when you weren't even realizing it," she said.

This production was the first collaboration between the State Theatre and the University Resident Theatre Company. Stage Manager Lauren Williams said the company usually holds its performances at the Pavilion Theatre, the Playhouse Theatre or the Citizens Bank Theatre, 127 S. Allen St.

The cast and crew had to adjust to a new space and to an audience younger than the college-aged crowd of their peers.

Williams (senior-stage management) said the company incorporated a Disney theme into the show's original script to make the 1970s cartoon series relatable to today's elementary school students.

Sets were designed to look big, bright and colorful, and costumes were planned so that audiences would be reminded of the Jonas Brothers, Selena Gomez and Taylor Swift throughout the performance.

Kaitlin Turner (sophomore-theatre), who played the role of Shulie in the production, said she and her fellow cast members had to put themselves in the minds of the children in the audiences while acting.

"We had to match their excitement and their energy on stage," she said.

Dan Higgins (sophomore-theatre) explained that much of the cast's improvisation between the musical numbers of the production was fueled by the dynamic response of the elementary school audiences.



To see more photos of the actors performing at the State Theatre this weekend: [psucollegian.com](http://psucollegian.com)

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