

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fullington debuts new Altoona bus route

Fullington Trailways is debuting a new bus route that will connect State College and Altoona. The route, which will begin bus rides Feb. 22, will have two morning trips and one returning trip in the evening, said Milt Weisman, vice president of Fullington Auto Bus Company.

The bus will make stops in Duncansville and Tyrone before reaching State College, where it will stop at the Bryce Jordan Center, Pattee Library and the State College bus terminal, he said.

■ There will be a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall. For every presenting donor, \$4 will be donated to THON.

■ Phi Beta Sigma will be sponsoring a "Stuff 4 Love" workshop at 2 p.m. in Pollock Rec Room. Proceeds will be going to THON.

■ Michael Mann, of Penn State, will speak about "Climate Change: What Can We Learn from Past Centuries?" at 4 p.m. in 112 Walker Building. The Department of Geography is sponsoring the event.

■ Penn State NAACP will sponsor the 8th annual Showtime at the Apollo: "For the love" from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. in Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall. Admission is \$5.

■ As the fourth installment of the Frontiers Lectures, Gregory Knight, of Penn State will speak about "The Global Water Crisis" at 11 a.m. Saturday in 100 Thomas Building.

■ The 62nd annual Mount Nittany Medical Charity Ball will be from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the Nittany Lion Inn. For ticket information and sponsorship opportunities, contact The Foundation for Mount Nittany Medical Center at (814) 234-6777.

■ Cesar Rodriguez, of Rutgers University, will speak about "Integrating Applied Chemical Ecology into Blueberry Pest Management" at 10:10 a.m. in 101 Agricultural Sciences and Industries Building. The department of Entomology is sponsoring the event.

■ Eran Rosenthal, of Cornell University, will speak about "Testing Gravity on Cosmological Scales" at 11 a.m. in 320 Whitmore Laboratory. The Institute for Gravitation and the Cosmos is sponsoring the event.

■ Neil Sharkey, of Penn State, will speak about "A Bird's Eye View of the Research Enterprise in the College of Health and Human Development" at 11:15 a.m. in 127 Noll Laboratory. The Department of Kinesiology is sponsoring the event.

DINNER

Findlay, Pollock, Redfer and Warnock: Black Bean Chili, Cream of Tomato Soup, Baked Chicken Breast, Bleu Cheese Dressing, Boneless Buffalo Chicken Wings, Celery Sticks, Crab Cakes, Grilled Portabella Po Boy Sandwich, Ranch Dressing

Simmons: Falafel, Low Fat Cucumber Sauce, Wheat Pita Bread, Baked Tofu Stir Fry, Bowtie Pasta with Shrimp, Ricotta and Grape Tomatoes, Fried Chicken-Breast, Turkey Burger, Broccoli and Cauliflower, Brown Rice and Grain Pilaf, Green Beans Almondine, Roasted Vegetables, Spinach, Sweet Potato Wedges, Wild Rice

Waring: Assorted Specialty Breads, Beef Barley Soup, Soup of the Day, Boneless Buffalo Chicken Wings, Crab Cakes, Long Green Beans, Peas and Carrots, Steak Fries, Chicken Polo a la Vino, BLT Pizza, Cheese Pizza, Hoagie Roll, Mainara Sauce, Meat Sauce, Meatballs in Sauce, Pasta Bar, Pepperoni Pizza, Black Bean Chili, Broccoli Florettes, Cheddar Vegetable, Cheese Sauce, Cous Cous, Creole Green Beans Hearty Vegetarian Chili, Macaroni and Cheese, Stewed Tomatoes, Vegetarian Burger



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Weather: Today: High 28



Tonight: Low 15



Tomorrow: High 27



Extended forecast campusweatherservice.com Courtesy of Campus Weather Service

ROSES ARE RED



Amanda August/Collegian

Evan Stearns (senior-landscape contracting) shows two students the roses that the Penn State Horticulture Club is selling for Valentine's Day. There are long stem roses in many colors on sale today from 10a.m. to 4 p.m. on the ground floor of the HUB-Robeson Center.

FirstEnergy to purchase rival Allegheny Energy

By Mark Williams ASSOCIATED PRESS

FirstEnergy said Thursday that it is buying Allegheny Energy in a \$4.7 billion stock deal that will bring together two neighboring rivals to form one of the biggest power companies in the country.

The new company will be made up of 10 utilities serving 6.1 million customers from Ohio to New Jersey, with \$16 billion in annual revenue and \$1.4 billion in profit. The deal is expected to close within 14 months.

"It's a natural fit that has the potential to produce lower risk, higher growth, a cleaner generation fleet, a stronger balance sheet, and increased earnings," Anthony Alexander, FirstEnergy's president and CEO, told analysts on a conference call.

There haven't been many big deals in the power sector recently. The recession has made financing difficult to get and electricity demand has slumped especially among industrial customers. That has forced utilities to slash costs and cut projects.

Gaining approvals for mergers from state regulators has been difficult as well. The First Energy-Allegheny deal must be approved by regulators in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia as well as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Shareholders of Allegheny, based in Greensburg, Pa., will receive 0.667 shares of FirstEnergy common stock in exchange for each share they own. That equals \$27.65 based on Wednesday's closing price, and represents a 32 percent premium over Allegheny's closing price of \$21.02 on Wednesday.

FirstEnergy also will assume \$3.8 billion in debt.

Analysts say the combination of First Energy and Allegheny will cut costs and the combined company should benefit from a recovering economy. Deutsche Bank's Jonathan Arnold cautioned investors that it has been tough to close utility deals. He said the companies may be a good fit, but there has been no discussion about concessions for utility customers, a crit-

ical factor in getting state regulatory approvals.

The deal comes as Congress and federal regulators consider caps on emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants, along with tighter regulations on other sources of pollution.

The companies said 80 percent of their combined generation will come from highly efficient coal plants and nuclear power. Arnold noted that Allegheny has improved its coal-fired plants, mitigating the environmental risk they pose.

"Whatever we face down the road from a carbon standpoint we will be better positioned given the size and character of the combined fleet than we would have been, than either one of us would have been stand-alone," First Energy's Alexander said.

The combination brings together FirstEnergy's 4.5 million customers operating under such names as Ohio Edison, Cleveland Electric Illuminating and Jersey Central Power and Light with Allegheny's 1.6 million customers that receive electricity from such utilities as Allegheny Power and Potomac Edison. The company will become the largest utility in Pennsylvania with 2 million customers.

Alexander will remain the top executive of the combined company, which will be based at FirstEnergy's headquarters in Akron, Ohio. Allegheny's top executive, Paul Evanson, will become executive vice chairman and report to Alexander.

FirstEnergy also on Thursday reported profit of \$238 million, or 78 cents per share, for the quarter ended Dec. 31 compared with profit of \$332 million, or \$1.09 per share, in the year-ago quarter.

Revenue fell to \$3 billion for the quarter from \$3.2 billion a year ago.

For the year, FirstEnergy reported profit of \$1 billion, or \$3.29 per share, compared with \$1.3 billion, or \$4.38 per share, in 2008. Revenue fell to \$13 billion from \$13.6 billion in 2008.

Allegheny shares jumped \$2.53, or 12 percent, to close at \$23.55 in Thursday trading. FirstEnergy shares fell \$1.87, or 4.5 percent, to close at \$39.59.

Floor

From Page 1.

earned the rank of second-degree black belt and has even spoken at THON events.

Boher and Flanagan — 2009 dancers for Penn State Dubois — said the support from the Setlock family helped them through THON.

"In a way, I felt like I was their big sister," Flanagan said.

And she had the love and pride of a big sister when she overheard another dancer praising Joey's Taekwondo demonstration at THON 2009 as she watched from the floor.

"I remember one of the other dancers saying something to the effect of, 'Wow, I wish that was our family. I'm so jealous,'" she said. "That was really cool. Everything from Kathy's speech to the Taekwondo, they did everything 110 percent."

But the mood of the floor eventually turns somber, as dancers lose energy and the hours tick on. In the last few hours of THON 09, Flanagan noticed a young boy sobbing as he watched a video showing

the pictures of children who had passed away set to Randy Travis' "Angels Among Us."

"We were all breaking down at that point, but he had completely lost it," she said.

The crying boy noticed his brother's picture on the screen — it reminded him of how much he lost.

"That's when I realized that love really belongs here," she said. "We were all hugging him and supporting each other."

In 2006, the Setlocks attended their first THON, visiting their dancers Ryan Miller, Class of 2008, and Kyle Hilfiger, Class of 2007.

That same year, Miller had severely aggravated a pre-existing injury at THON but was determined to stay on the floor until the end of the 46 hours.

Though he had to go to the medical room after his foot and ankle swelled, he achieved his goal.

"He didn't want to give up," Joey's dad, Stan Setlock said. "That was really a good deal of love there."

One of Stan's favorite memories from the floor that year was watching Joey and Michael's taekwondo demonstration during the talent

Canning

From Page 1.

Canning and Alternative Fundraiser Chairwoman Alyssa Hirschberg for Pillar, an independent THON organization, said the group had planned to venture to Long Island despite the snow.

But after being handed the new restrictions, Pillar members are canceling the canning trip after all.

Most of the group's registered canning locations were intersections, and the group didn't have time to contact businesses for permission in time for the weekend. Now the group can only hope THONvelopes and other fundraisers will make up for lost canning profits.

But despite disappointment over the lost bonding experience and opportunity to raise money for the kids before THON, Hirschberg (sophomore-psychology) said officials made the right decision.

"It was smart of them to do that, because organizations like us probably would have still gone, because we don't know what the conditions are like," Hirschberg said.

Jamie Nevel, fundraising co-chairman for Atlas THON, said the group was already pushing storefront fundraising after getting concerned e-mails earlier this week.

Atlas members also plan on using THON's recently released door-to-door solicitation postcards to raise money this weekend. Nevel (junior-mechanical engineering) said. Though he predicts a drop in canning profits this weekend, Atlas' record-breaking canning weekends earlier this year will help compensate for the loss.

"We've done better on our canning weekends this year than in the past," Nevel said. "Our canning total is going to be big anyway."

Nevel said THON officials' decision was in the best interest of both safety and future canning trips.

"Ultimately, THON is looking out for the safety of the canners, because as soon as someone gets injured on a canning weekend, you could see canning disappear entirely," he said. "We're trying to do all we can for the kids, but ultimately, you want your students to be safe, and no amount of money is worth someone getting hurt on a canning weekend."

To e-mail reporter: svp5071@psu.edu

Vagina Monologues

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According to the licensing agreement, the production staff has rights to the play between the months of January and March, said Shana Lombardi, who co-directed the Vagina Monologues last year.

Co-director Cat Farley said she doesn't really see the later debut as breaking a tradition. And while having the production in the Forum doesn't provide the best theatrical space, Morocco said there is plenty that can be done with it.

"I'm really curious to see how this pans out," Farley (junior-theatre) said.

Lombardi (senior-biobehavioral health) said the productions are usually on Valentine's Day because V-Day symbolizes not only love but also the movement against violence towards women.

To e-mail reporter: svp5071@psu.edu

show — something they have done in the several years since.

Miller and Hilfiger went on stage toward the end of Joey and Michael's demonstration — in spite of their fatigue — to hold the boards for the boys. Miller and Hilfiger had danced for about a day and a half at that point, Setlock said.

"They had some trouble because they were tired, but they were excited to do it," Setlock said. "When they came down, they weren't as tired anymore. The boys both loved it."

The Setlocks have accumulated scores of memories from the THON floor. For Joey and Michael, those two days in February mean plenty of silly string, volleyball games and water gun fights.

But it also means being surrounded by people who love Joey. After all, he's the reason the dancers stand for 46 hours.

"It's just amazing. I don't think there's anything else like it," Stan Setlock said. "Everyone we see, we tell them to go see what the dancers and what everyone involved in THON does."

To e-mail reporter: svp5071@psu.edu