

Corwin discusses extinction

By Karina Yücel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

ALTOONA, Pa. — Jeff Corwin is known mostly for his work as a conservationist, naturalist and Animal Planet host.

But Thursday night during a lecture at Penn State Altoona, he showed off his comedic chops as well.

Corwin's hilarious lecture on extinction wasn't exactly your standard, run-of-the-mill speech. Corwin started his lecture with humorous video clips of himself interacting with animals to lighten the mood of the serious topic — extinction.

Corwin was the first lecturer of Penn State Altoona's Distinguished Speaker Series.

About 150 people attended the lecture Thursday night, from babies and Boy Scouts to students and senior citizens. Animal lovers of all stripes made the trip to see Corwin's lecture and learn about humans' involvement in animal extinction.

Corwin began his lecture talking about the day that he knew animals and nature were what he wanted to pursue as his career.

During a weekend he spent at his grandmother's house, he found a snake. He had never seen one before and thought he had found a new species of animal. His grandmother had told him



Chloe Elmer/Collegian

Naturalist Jeff Corwin speaks to students and Altoona residents at Penn State Altoona on Thursday night as part of their Distinguished Speaker Series.

to get rid of the snake, but Corwin said that he loved it. That was when he realized his passion for animals and nature, he said.

Corwin also told stories about his interactions with various animals over the past 15 years that he has been filming and researching.

Corwin finished his lecture by saying that extinction is a very real problem and affects everyone and everything.

"I am going to explore what extinction is today compared to 65 million years ago with the dinosaurs and the other four natural extinctions," Corwin said. "This is the sixth extinction."

Corwin said that extinction now is being caused by humans, whereas 65 million years ago, extinction was caused by nature.

"This isn't some natural or super natural event. It is because of us. We are the asteroid making the perfect storm of destruction of habitats, climate change, exploitation and pollution,"

Corwin said.

Corwin said that this mass extinction isn't caused by evolution, but by humans.

"This is very real, everyday species go extinct," Corwin said. "Every 20 minutes a whole species is wiped out, never to be seen again."

Sam Myers (freshman-division of undergraduate studies) said that he chose to attend the lecture to learn more about what Corwin has been working on for the past couple of years.

Ethan, 11, and Michaela Bowser, 8, of Altoona, said that they used to watch Corwin on Animal Planet. The two were very interested in learning more about animals and Corwin's adventures across the world.

The Bowsers said they were upset that Corwin didn't bring any animals to the show. Myers agreed, saying that animals would've added to the lecture.

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Students set to dance to SOMA's MP3 beat

By David Strader
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

People will be dancing in the streets — to music only they can hear.

Students Organizing the Multiple Arts (SOMA) will host its MP3 Experiment at 2 p.m. Saturday Oct. 2 in front of the Thomas Building.

The experiment — inspired by New York City-based comedy troupe "Improv Everywhere" — will ask participants to plug their headphones in and simultaneously listen to an MP3 made and distributed by SOMA.

The track — about 20 minutes long — will prompt students to perform a number of synchronized tasks ranging from high fives to some less conventional activities, SOMA President Mike Palmer said.

"One time in the HUB, we had to pretend we lost an eye contact, so there were 30 people looking around and crawling under tables," Palmer (senior-management and integrative arts) said.

And with the event running through Parents and Families Weekend, SOMA Secretary Nathan Larimer (sophomore-film and video) said the display is sure to gain some attention.

"There are going to be a lot of confused parents who are wondering where their child's tuition is going," he said.

Nick Weingartner, SOMA's media relations chairman, said

the event will be an entertaining sight for everyone in and around the experiment.

"There will be a whirlwind of bewilderment and artistic assessment with a heavy dose of confusion, ending up to be a great experience for the participants as well as the spectators," Weingartner (senior-media studies) said.

The MP3 Experiment will contribute to SOMA's initiative to expand its spectrum of arts events — a goal Larimer said the club wants to especially work toward this semester.

"This year we're really trying to push for more spontaneous art at the drop of a hat with no real direction," he said.

Dana Robinson (sophomore-agricultural science) said she's glad to see Penn State clubs hosting atypical events like the MP3 Experiment.

Weingartner said the unconventional event will be the year's first venture into "guerilla" art.

"It's merging aspects of music and performance art," he said. "It's underground art, bringing art into untraditional ventures."

Those wishing to participate in the MP3 Experiment are recommended to arrive early with their MP3 players, as the experiment will begin at exactly 2 p.m.

To download the appropriate track for the event, go to psuso-ma.com.

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Seniors search for underclassmen aid in film class projects

By Allegra O'Neill
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn Staters who hope to be involved in a film one day don't even have to leave Happy Valley to fulfill their dreams — thanks to a group of senior film majors.

Members of the Student Film Organization held a meeting Thursday night in Carnegie to give seniors a chance to talk about their films for COMM 437 (Narrative Video/Filmmaking).

The event was designed to help

filmmakers find crew members, sound technicians and actors for the films they will create in class for the Senior Film Series, said Student Film Organization President Sam Broscoe.

After each group discussed their film, attendees were given a chance to talk to each group and exchange information.

Broscoe (senior-film and video), along with 11 other film groups, presented his senior project, "The Road Ahead."

"The film is A Christmas Carol

archetype," Broscoe said. "The main character, John, takes a literal drive down memory lane as he is guided by a wiser influence."

Broscoe said his film is in need of assistant producers and editors as well as a sound designer and sound mixer for post-production.

Adam Rutter (senior-film and video) said his film "Last Noel" will be a different spin on a Christmas story.

"This film humanizes Santa and makes him want to be normal and have a kid of his own," Rutter said.

"When his wife finds out he's sterile, she starts having affairs on him. It's a dark comedy."

The jobs needed varied as much as the premises of each movie.

Some seniors, like Randall Troy, were looking for students to help create costumes for his film's "quirky characters."

Troy's (senior-film) film is set in the future, in a time when all technology has stopped working.

"My film is about an executioner who must choose between his career and his family," Samantha

Shapiro (senior film and video) said. "Basically he is told to execute his fiancé's father, so we'll see what happens with that."

Shapiro said to make her film work she is going to need a lot of extras.

"We are hoping to film it in an abandoned jail, so if anyone wants to be a prisoner or a dead body, that would be great," Shapiro said. "We are going to need a lot of dead bodies and a lot of blood."

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