

Couple donates \$4 million to Penn State

By Mike Hrick
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

For Tom Flad, donating to Penn State was a simple choice because of the opportunities his alma mater offered him as a graduate.

"I wanted to put my money to a place that I support. In hindsight, it was a simple decision," Flad, Class of 1974, said.

Tom and his wife Karen Flad, of Bethlehem, Pa., have donated \$4 million to the Penn State College

of the Liberal Arts and athletic department.

And \$2 million of the couple's donation will go to the Italian language and literature program. The Paterno Liberal Arts Undergraduate Fellows Program will receive \$1 million. The other \$1 million will be divided equally between the Penn State football and rugby programs, said Vicki Fong, manager of communications for the College of the Liberal Arts. Fong said liberal arts students and faculty members are

thrilled with the gift — one of the college's largest.

"This means big opportunities for our students. That they were able to make such a gift is a wonderful story," she said.

Tom Flad graduated from Penn State as a pre-law major but decided not to pursue a career in law after finding his calling — teaching, he said.

He received a B.S. from Kutztown State University in elementary education and married his wife Karen, a fellow teacher, in

1978. The couple taught at a school district in Columbia, Pa., before Tom began a successful career in the housing industry, Fong said.

He currently serves as the area director of MetLife Home Loans in Lehigh Valley.

Tom and Karen's son Stephen, Class of 2006, played rugby at the university and now teaches elementary school children in Lehigh Valley. Flad said his Italian mother and grandmother raised him as bilingual growing up in Easton, Pa. He said his Italian studies at

Penn State made a large impact on him as a student, causing him to realize the importance of his liberal arts education later in life.

Flad said he admires Joe Paterno for the coach's dedication to athletes honoring "education first." Selzer said the donation from the Flads will help liberal arts undergraduates to study abroad, accept leading internship opportunities and take on difference-making research projects.

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Fraternity fundraises for AIDS awareness

By Matt Scorzafave
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Members of Delta Lambda Phi are holding two fundraisers this holiday season, both raising awareness for issues involving the LGBT community, students and local community.

The fraternity is heading an ornament sale to benefit The AIDS Project of Centre County, as well as a wristband sale to benefit the Trevor Project.

Jeremy LaMaster, the fraternity's philanthropy chairman, said this year's ornament sale is a second annual event.

"All of the money goes to the AIDS Project of Centre County, which provides free HIV testing, as well as risk reduction counseling," LaMaster (senior-biology) said.

LaMaster said last year the effort raised about \$900, and the fraternity is hoping to surpass last year's total.

Members of the fraternity are asking for a \$3 minimum donation for the ornaments.

"We're definitely hoping to get more than \$1,000," he said.

LaMaster said it's important



Jeremy LaMaster (senior-biology) takes an ornament and donates money in the LGBT Resource Center in the Boucke building.

for students to be educated on HIV/AIDS.

"I feel like things have become a little lax. AIDS is still around, it's still an issue and we need to work to eliminate it," he said.

Brendon Wall, the fraternity's president, agreed, emphasizing the importance of awareness.

"It's important to decrease the AIDS stigma. This makes people think about making a difference, even if it's something they don't see every day," Wall (senior-energy, business and finance) said.

Fraternity member Adam Del Rosso said benefits from the wristband sale the fraternity is sponsoring will partially benefit the Trevor Project, a 24-hour anonymous hotline for gay or questioning youth who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide.

Del Rosso (senior-meteorology)

said this semester's pledge class decided to sell purple wristbands to raise awareness about suicide rates within the LGBT community.

"Even at the college level, there are gay people who aren't out. Something like this will show people that they have a community backing them up," he said.

Del Rosso said the fraternity wanted to donate to something worthwhile and not time sensitive. With the help of other members of the fraternity, Del Rosso said the group began with 400 wristbands, and has nearly sold out.

Ornaments and wristbands can both be found at the LGBT Resource Center in 101 Boucke Building up until winter break.

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Students prepare for cold canning weekend

By Megan Rogers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The THON spirit won't be contained just within State College this weekend — hundreds of students are trekking across the state and surrounding areas to can for the Interfraternity/Panhellenic Council Dance Marathon.

And though the winter weather has arrived over the past few days, some students said they are hopeful the temperatures will increase donations during the second canning weekend of the semester.

THON public relations captain Colleen Hanrahan said there are about 937 registered canning locations, though she said some organizations have groups going to different sites. On average, about 269 student organizations can each weekend, Hanrahan said.

People are much more generous to canners when the weather is unsavory, said Elise Rodgers, executive chairwoman for special interest organization Domani.

The tri-state area is always filled with canners, Hanrahan said. But other locations receiving some canning attention this weekend include New York, West Virginia, Virginia, the D.C. area and Delaware, among others, she said.

One of the most sure-fire ways to get a driver to donate is just to smile and be polite. Pi Beta Phi sorority member Dana Yurchak said.

Yurchak, who said she is psyched to host a canning weekend at her home in the Pittsburgh, Pa. area for the first time, said her sorority has almost 100 students bundling up to brave the cold for the kids.

"I hope the weather isn't too bad so people roll down their windows," Yurchak (senior-biobehavioral health) said.

Even though the weekend falls close to finals week, Rodgers (senior-early childhood education) said students are always willing to take the time to can.

"One of our strengths as an organization is that we always have people willing to go out and can," Hanrahan (senior-advertising) said. "It's a great way to raise THON's total for the Four Diamonds fund."

To spice up the canning weekend, some Springfield organization canners are having themed weekends.

One theme is Disney. Springfield executive director Meg Barnatt said — the theme is just one of the ample bonding opportunities of a canning weekend.

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Downtown stores may face less business with early finals week

By Nathan Pipenberg
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Holiday shopping in State College used to be something of a tradition, according to Rapid Transit owner Terry Losch. After classes ended for the fall semester, students would sell their textbooks and with cash in hand, spend it all in downtown stores.

That annual practice often depends on Penn State's final week, which ends Dec. 17 this year, eight days before Christmas, leaving downtown storeowners wondering how that will affect their sales.

For Rapid Transit, 115 S. Allen St., classes ending early means students will only be in town for a few of what Losch considers to be the most profitable days of the season, the period from Dec. 15 to 24. These are the final days of shopping when online stores can no longer guarantee that items will reach their customers in time for the holidays, he said.

Additionally, students tend to be preoccupied studying for exams, and find more reason to shop from the comfort of their dorm rooms and apartments before the Dec. 15 to 24 time span.

But Steve Artz, the owner of Gift

Adventures, 137 E. Beaver Ave., sees the early departure of Penn State students as an advantage.

It might go against conventional wisdom, but Artz said more time between the end of classes and the holidays means that parents who arrive in town will be more relaxed and willing to browse during some downtime.

When finals end a little bit early, Artz said, he often sees students shopping with their parents.

"They have breathing room and time for casual shopping," he said.

The casual atmosphere is one reason why Artz thinks Gift Adventures does so well during

the holiday season. Compared to wholesale retailers, "things are very quiet for us around here," he said.

Judy Moyer, owner of the Animal Kingdom, 103 S. Allen St., offered a different perspective on the issue. While students are great customers, she said, business is also solid over break because town residents enjoy the shopping experience more when they don't have to fight the crowds of student shoppers.

"When the students leave people actually start shopping," she said.

On Black Friday, Artz said Gift

Adventures saw its fair share of traffic, but not until the afternoon. Customers told him they had been to the early morning sales at Best Buy and Target, but didn't come downtown until after a midday nap.

Geoff Brugler, owner of Appalachian Outdoors, 123 S. Allen St., expressed a similar sentiment.

"Everyone has a mall in their hometown with chain stores," he said. "There's an incentive to shop downtown where there are unique stores."

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