

Athlete turns to acting in one-man show

By Hannah Rishel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A former professional football player will visit State College tonight, but not in Beaver Stadium. Former Houston Oiler Bo Eason will perform his one-man show "Runt of the Litter" at 7:30 tonight in Schwab Auditorium. Tickets are \$17 for University Park students, \$30 for adults and \$24 for children 18 and younger. They are available at Eisenhower Auditorium, Penn State Downtown Theatre Center, HUB-Robeson Center Information Desk and the Bryce Jordan Center. The play is based on an event Eason almost experienced when he was playing professional football. His character sits in the locker room, preparing to play a foot-

ball game against his brother. When he was playing for the Houston Oilers in the '80s, Eason was scheduled to play a game against his brother who played for the New England Patriots. The game was called off because of a strike, but the idea "haunted" Eason, inspiring him to write the play after he retired. John Mark Rafacz, editorial manager for the Center for the Performing Arts, said the play is good for the football-crazy environment of Penn State, and Eason's personal story adds to the enjoyment of the show. "It's always interesting when anyone has a mid-career change," he said. Eason said he feels a similar sensation performing on stage as when he played football. He asks himself the same question backstage that he used to ask

while he was waiting to run out of the tunnel: "Why did I put myself in this position?" But despite the nerves, Eason said he loves both activities because there's no do-overs in either of them. "You get that opportunity in almost anything you do except in sports or professional theater," he said. "I like that part about it, because it's so rare in life. No matter what happens you've got to go forward." Eason said both activities take the same amount of work, especially because he's the only actor on stage. "You've got to be bigger than life," he said. "You can never relax because you can't hand the energy off to someone else. My energy is going back and forth between me and the audience." Anytime someone in the audi-

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Bo Eason
former professional football player

ence isn't paying attention, Eason said he knows because they aren't handing the energy back to him. In these moments, he said, he gives it more to gain their interest. Steve Travis, a member of No Refund Theater and the Penn State Thespians, said doing a one-man show would challenge an actor because they couldn't play off what their actors are doing — something he said is a "motivation." "A famous saying goes that 'acting is reacting,' and I believe that,"

Travis, Class of 2010, said. "As an actor a lot of what I do is just feeding off the other people on stage." Eason said he likes performing the show to college students because they're starting to create their own "20-year plan," but usually forget about the dreams they had as children. "I hope they think 'I can actually go back, rediscover that dream and make it come true because this guy did it,'" Eason said.

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Female commentator to visit

By Ashley Smalls
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Award-winning sports television commentator Leah Secondo will answer questions and talk to students at a free public session Wednesday in the Foster Auditorium at Paterno Library. Secondo has covered sports during the past 26 years for the Big Ten Network, CBS College Sports, Fox Sports Net, ESPN, Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League.



Secondo

She is also known for her work with the Women's National Basketball Association as a radio color analyst for the Connecticut Sun, according to the WNBA's website. The public session will be a chance for students to ask questions and receive answers from an experienced sports journalist, said Steve Sampson, director of college relations for the College of Communications. "Anytime students get a chance to complement what they do in the class with [a professional], it's valuable," he said.

Secondo will also cover the Lady Lions' basketball game Wednesday night against Army.

"She thought it would be a good idea that since she would be there already [for the game], she could hold a public session for students, too," Sampson said. Secondo graduated from Southern Connecticut State University and became Connecticut's first female sports-caster when she joined WTNH-TV, according to a Penn State press release. "Leah is a professional. She likes to take care of business in a professional way," College of Communications Faculty Manager Karen Bryan said. "She's never not prepared. She takes pride in what she does." Some students said they weren't surprised that an experienced sports journalist is speaking at Penn State — but they were intrigued that the veteran reporter is a woman. "We always have experts in sports come to Penn State," Courtney Harris (freshman-engineering) said. "This time it's a woman. That's something to be more ecstatic about. It's not only men who understand sports." Bryan said she can't imagine how difficult breaking into sports must've been for Secondo as a woman in a predominantly male industry. "It's never easy for a woman in most of the things we do. But if you're determined you can make

If you go

What: Sports commentator Leah Secondo will answer questions at a public session.
When: Wednesday, Dec. 8 at 12:30 p.m.
Where: Foster Auditorium in Paterno Library
Details: The event is free and open to the public

it, and Secondo proves that," Bryan said. Secondo played basketball, field hockey, ice hockey and softball and later coached college softball — sports experience that helps her reporting, Bryan said. "I've worked with Leah on the field hockey games here in the past," she said. "She definitely has the knowledge. I imagine being an athlete herself has helped her to know what she's talking about." The free session should help students fully understand the working world and help them become more prepared for life after graduation — even if sports journalism isn't their chosen career, Sampson said. "I think Leah just wants to share her knowledge about where she is in her life and where she came from," Bryan said.



George Burns' Associated Press

Author Jonathan Franzen is interviewed by Oprah Winfrey. Winfrey selected Franzen's book "Freedom" as her 64th book club selection, despite Franzen calling her past choices "schmaltzy" years ago.

Oprah moves ahead, hosts author Franzen

By Caryn Rousseau
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Oprah Winfrey and author Jonathan Franzen have put their rocky past behind them. Franzen appeared on Monday's "The Oprah Winfrey Show," embracing his host after she chose his bestselling novel "Freedom" for her popular book club. Winfrey did not have Franzen on her show nine years ago, when his previous novel "The Corrections" was a book club selection, because he called some of her choices "schmaltzy." Winfrey said Monday she didn't have Franzen on her show then because she didn't want him to feel "uncomfortable."

"Bottomline is, I'm happy to have you," Winfrey said. "I'm happy to be here." Franzen replied. Winfrey said in September that she read "Freedom" after Franzen sent her a copy during the summer along with a note. She said she considered it a "tour de force" after the first chapter and called it a "masterpiece." Released in late August, "Freedom" was virtually canonized by critics before publication and has topped best-seller lists. Franzen was the subject of a Time Magazine cover story, titled "Great American Novelist."

Franzen, 51, who is widely regarded as one of his generation's leading fiction writers, was branded as a snob for the comment even though he apologized quickly and repeatedly. "I spoke in very long sentences, and then little pieces of those sentences sounded bad, and your feelings were probably, understandably, hurt," Franzen told Winfrey on Monday. He also told her he considers himself a "Midwest egalitarian" and not a snob. "My idea of the book I want to write, the book I want to read, is one that everybody can find a way to connect to," Franzen said. "That's really what I've devoted my whole career to." The pair discussed Franzen's writing process, how he started writing "Freedom" and his visit with President Barack Obama.

Also Monday, Winfrey announced her 65th book club selection would be a combination of two Charles Dickens classics, "A Tale of Two Cities" and "Great Expectations." The two novels have been issued in a single bound Penguin paperback edition of about 800 pages with a list price of \$20. The electronic version, also from Penguin, sells for \$7.99. Because the copyright has long expired on the 19th-century novels, they are available through a variety of publishers and retailers. "Great Expectations" can be downloaded for free on Amazon.com's Kindle reader. "A Tale of Two Cities" costs 99 cents on Barnes & Noble's e-book device, the Nook. The novels also can be downloaded for free through the new Google book-store. The AP reported the picks Sunday after purchasing a copy of the new volume, which has Winfrey's logo on the cover.

Google opens Internet book store

By Michael Liedtke
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — Google Inc. is making the leap from digital librarian to merchant in a challenge to Amazon.com Inc. and its Kindle electronic reader. The long-awaited Internet book store, which opened Monday in the U.S., draws upon a portion of the 15 million printed books that Google has scanned into its computers during the past six years. About 4,000 publishers, including CBS Corp.'s Simon & Schuster Inc., Random House Inc. and Pearson PLC's Penguin Group, are also allowing Google to carry many of their recently released books in the new store. Those publishing deals will ensure that most of the current best sellers are among the 3 million e-books initially available in

Google's store, said Amanda Edmonds, who oversaw the company's partnerships. Millions more out-of-print titles will appear in Google's store, called eBooks, if the company can gain federal court approval of a proposed class-action settlement with U.S. publishers and authors. The \$125 million settlement has been under review for more than two years. It faces stiff opposition from rivals, consumer watchdogs, academic experts, literary agents and even foreign governments, which worry that Google would get too much power to control prices in the still-nascent market for electronic books. Amazon.com, which started its business as a seller of books over the Internet, is among the competitors trying to squelch the settlement. The U.S. Justice Department has advised the

judge overseeing the case that the settlement probably would violate antitrust and copyright laws. Books bought from Google's store can be read on any machine with a Web browser. There are also free applications that can be installed on Apple Inc.'s iPad and iPhone, as well as other devices powered by Google's own mobile operating system, Android. But Google's eBooks can't be loaded on to the Kindle. Electronic books are expected to generate nearly \$1 billion in U.S. sales this year and climb to \$1.7 billion by 2012 as more people buy electronic readers and computer tablets such as the iPad, according to Forrester Research. The research group expects a total of 15 million e-readers and tablets to have been sold in the U.S. by the end of the year.

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