

The Daily Collegian

SENIOR SEND-OFF

THE FIRST OF A THREE-PART SERIES FEATURING THE CO-CAPTAINS OF THE PENN STATE WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM | PAGE 8

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Ceremony held for new tower

Airport dedicates new facility

By Zach Geiger
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Mother Nature may have grounded the outdoor portion of the ribbon cutting ceremony, but the cold could not delay the dedication of University Park Airport's new control tower on Tuesday.

Instead of a ceremony on the runway tarmac, the group in attendance — which included Penn State President Graham Spanier and Sen. Jake Corman, R-Centre — filled the General

Aviation Terminal of the State College airport, 2535 Airport Rd.

The control tower is scheduled to open on Jan. 15 of next year, airport director Bryan Rodgers said.

The addition of a control tower will improve safety at the facility and will be an asset to the economic development of the region by allowing for larger flights in and out of the airport, he said.

"The control tower will dramatically enhance safety for aircrafts that operate at University Park Airport," Rodgers said.

Assistant Airport Director Ed



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Penn State President Graham Spanier points out how the runway lights work from the new control tower at University Park Airport.

Foster said the tower will employ six air traffic controllers when it opens next year. Two operators and a supervisor will staff the tower and provide about 18 hours

of controlled airspace within a five-mile radius of State College, he said.

Now the airport — which See AIRPORT, Page 2.

PSU helps staff cope

With its health care plan uncertain, Penn State is working to help its employees with changes.

By Mike Hricik
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

While negotiations surrounding the expiration of the Highmark Blue Shield PPOBlue plan with Geisinger Health System stall, the Penn State Office of Human Resources and Highmark are setting up resources to help university employees cope with the possible changes.

These resources include a new web page, a "transition to care" plan for those with long-lasting medical conditions and an Employee Special Assistance Fund for faculty and staff with financial difficulties.

Danville, Pa.-based Geisinger unexpectedly declined the extension of Highmark's PPOBlue plan, the health insurance plan of the university, last week after Dec. 31.

Geisinger Manager of Clinical Enterprise Communications Marcy Marshall said the health system cites Highmark's contract renewal terms as the reason for the conflict.

If the two do not reach an agreement, Penn State employees using Geisinger will face out-of-network fees starting Jan. 1, 2011.

Highmark and Geisinger representatives said they could not comment on ongoing negotiations.

One-third of Penn State's \$250 million health care budget goes to employees under Geisinger Health System.

The new web page, ohr.psu.edu/benefits, includes frequently asked questions, contact information and updates on negotiations, said Billie Willits, associate vice president for strategic initiatives in finance and business.

She said the site should provide employees with peace of mind during a prospective difficult transition.

"We intend to keep our faculty See HEALTH CARE, Page 2.



Sarah Finnegan/Collegian

The Phi Kappa Theta house displays its holiday decorations during the Holiday Lights Tour, a community outreach event held Tuesday night.

Fraternities light up community

By Christina Gallagher and Jessica Tully
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

State College residents young and old came together to celebrate the holiday season by touring 30 fraternity houses in the third annual Holiday Lights Tour on Tuesday night.

The Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils and Off-Campus Student Union sponsored the night as a community outreach event.

The tour began at Acacia fraternity, where participants escaped the bitter cold and were welcomed with hot chocolate, food, holiday music and Christmas decorations as they waited for the buses to whisk them away on a magical adventure of lights.

Buses transported about 200 people throughout the night to various fraternity houses, some of which had interior decorations in addition to exterior holiday lights. The houses with indoor holiday

displays also invited the tourgoers inside their homes.

Acacia fraternity President Chip Ray said the Holiday Lights Tour is a great community service activity, especially for the kids in the neighborhoods surrounding fraternity row.

"As a little kid, I liked to see houses decorated like a winter wonderland. This is a great experience for little kids — it's like being at the North Pole for them," Ray (sophomore-engineering) said.

Not only did Beta Theta Pi feature lights outside, Pat Samanns (sophomore-business) dressed up in a Santa suit to greet tourgoers as they entered the house. Once the participants entered the house, they said they were all impressed by the 23' 9" Christmas tree, which was on display.

"The houses were pretty because of the Christmas trees," said Halie Gummo, 7, of Bellefonte.

State College Mayor Elizabeth See TOUR, Page 2.

Former NFL star performs at PSU

By Hannah Rishel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A former National Football League player has to struggle with what is more important: his lifelong goal or his relationship with his older brother.

Bo Eason performed his one-man show "Runt of the Litter" Tuesday night in Schwab Auditorium.

The play takes place in a locker room, prior to a football game that will decide which team will play in the Super Bowl. Eason's character has been working to play in the Super Bowl since he was 9 years old. The only thing standing between him and his life-long goal is his older brother.

"Runt of the Litter," which was also written by Eason, was inspired by an event that almost happened to him while he was playing for the Houston Oilers in



Christine Reckner/Collegian

Former Houston Oiler Bo Eason performs his one-man show "Runt of the Litter" on Tuesday night in Schwab Auditorium.

the '80s. The Oilers were scheduled to play against the New England Patriots, for whom Eason's older brother played quarterback.

The game was called off due to a strike, but the idea of facing off against his brother haunted Eason, which led him to writing "Runt of the Litter" once he got into acting after retiring from the NFL.

The show takes Eason's character from 45 minutes before kick

off until the end of the game. In the beginning, he talks about his team — a team of "common men who do uncommon things" — and his mother, who sends him information about every player on the opposing team prior to all his games.

As the play progresses, Eason talks about getting into football, wanting to make his father proud and competing with his older brother. While Eason trained as a See RUNT, Page 2.

Royster remembers record-setting career

By Andrew J. Cassavell
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Curt Warner and Evan Royster will forever be linked in Penn State history.

Warner was the man with the school's all-time rushing record until late October. Royster was the one chasing him.

Sunday, at the annual Quarterback Club team banquet, the two met for the first time.

"I got a chance to meet him, finally," said Warner, who talked with Royster before the banquet, then gave a speech in which he acknowledged Royster's accomplishments early on. "I've watched his career from afar. It was nice to talk with him person-to-person."

And it's been quite a career for the fifth-year senior from Fairfax, Va.

He is the all-time leading rusher at a school that churns out top-tier tailbacks. He's just the seventh back to rush for more than 1,000 yards in two different seasons at Penn State and needs 84 yards in the Outback Bowl to become the school's first three-time 1,000-yard rusher.



Chloe Elmer/Collegian

Evan Royster is the all-time leading rusher at Penn State.

Royster's critics — and there are quite a few of them — downplay those achievements on a regular basis. So, too, does Evan Royster.

The introverted Royster has avoided talk about his legacy and his personal accomplishments throughout the season. Now, one See ROYSTER, Page 2.