

# Southern Skies

Volume 28, Number 1

Journal of the Southeastern Planetarium Association

Winter 2008



## Table of Contents

SEPA Officers.....	2
President's Message .....	3
IPS Report .....	4
Editor's Message .....	5
Small Talk .....	6

Comet Holmes .....	10
SEPA Candidates .....	11
News from SEPA States .....	15

*Comet Holmes on Nov. 17, 2007. Credit: George Fleenor  
Nikon D-100, Nikkor 180mm f-2.8 w/2x (540mm efl),  
90 sec, ISO 400, piggyback 16" DOB, dark-frame subtracted*

## Officers of the Southeastern Planetarium Association

### President

Adam Thanz  
Bays Mountain Planetarium  
853 Bays Mountain Park Road  
Kingsport, TN 37660  
(423) 229-9447, Fax: (423) 224-2589  
Email: thanz@ci.kingsport.tn.us

### President-Elect

Jon Elvert  
Irene W Pennington Planetarium  
La. Art & Science Museum  
100 South River Road  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
(225) 344-9478; Fax (225) 344-9477  
Email: jelvert@lasm.org

### Past-President

Patsy Wilson  
Margaret C. Woodson Planetarium  
1636 Parkview Circle  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
(704) 639-3004, Fax: (704) 639-3015  
Email: wilsonpk@rss.k12.nc.us

### Secretary/Treasurer

Mickey Jo Sorrell  
Morehead Planetarium & Science Center  
CB#3480 UNC-CH  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599  
(919) 962-3300  
Email: sorrell@email.unc.edu

### IPS Council Representative

John Hare  
3602 23rd Avenue West  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
(941) 746-3522, Fax: (941) 750-9497  
Email: johnhare@earthlink.net

## Editorial Staff of *Southern Skies*

### Southern Skies Editor

James Sullivan  
Buehler Planetarium & Observatory, BCC  
3501 Davie Road  
Davie, FL 33314  
(954) 201-6681, Fax: (954) 475-2858  
Email: jsulliva@broward.edu

### Associate Editors

#### Technical Column

Robert Cruz  
Miami Space Transit Planetarium  
Miami Science Museum  
3280 South miami Avenue  
Miami, FL 33129  
305-646-4200  
Email: rcruz@miamisci.org

### Associate Editors

#### Small Talk

Elizabeth Wasiluk  
Berkeley County Planetarium  
109 Ridge Road North  
Hedgesville, WV 25427  
(304) 754-3354, Fax: (304) 754-7445  
Email: isbeth4@hotmail.com

*Southern Skies* is the quarterly journal of the Southeastern Planetarium Association published for the purpose of communicating association news, reports, reviews, and resources to its members. Contents © 2008 by the Southeastern Planetarium Association and individual authors. Permission is granted to reprint articles in other planetarium, astronomy, or science related publications under the following conditions: 1. Attach a credit to the article stating, "This article was originally published in *Southern Skies*, journal of the Southeastern Planetarium Association;" and 2. Send courtesy copies of your publication to both the *Southern Skies* editor and the author.

# President's Message

Adam Thanz  
Bays Mountain Planetarium  
Kingsport, TN

2008 is indeed a year of activity. On the political front, candidates are lining up to vie for the highest office in the United States. On the astronomical front, educational facilities like planetariums will be gearing up to help celebrate the IYA, or International Year of Astronomy, in 2009. With the backing of the United Nations, it may reach the prestige of the IGY (International Geophysical Year) back in 1958. The IGY's purpose was to increase interest in the sciences and math for the emerging importance of space exploration. Are we on the cusp of

a new era? Will the IYA provide a stepping stone for future scientists? For the future of the common citizen? 2009 is the 400th anniversary of the use of the telescope for astronomical purposes by Galileo Galilei. It also represents Galileo's development of the scientific method. Empirical evidence led to dramatic changes in our understanding of the solar system. He also realized that the force of gravity is the same, regardless of the mass it is affecting. The list goes on and on. The real reason of Galileo's importance was for the revelations of what was really around us, not for what we assumed things were. The reason for the IYA is similar in that it wants to help the world's citizens to rediscover their place in the Universe. We planetarians should be proud to be on the cutting edge of this task. The IYA will only make our job more important in the eyes of the public. What will you do for the IYA? We at Bays Mountain will continue with public daytime and nighttime viewings, planetarium shows and Astronomy Day. We are also refurbishing our theater to provide an elegant new star field, cutting edge technology like full-dome video, and a new floor layout for increased audience interactivity. See

(Continued on page 8)

Rates and submission formats for advertising space in SEPA's quarterly journal *Southern Skies* are:

Rates	Dimensions
\$100.	Full-page 7" wide x 10" high
\$50.	Half-page 7" wide x 4.5" high
\$25.	Quarter-page 3" wide x 4" high

These rates are per issue and in B&W copy. The entire back cover of our journal is also available either in B&W for \$125, or in color for \$150. A 10% discount to any size ad can be offered only with a year's (four issues) commitment of advertising. Ads accepted on a space available basis. Ads must be camera ready and conform to dimensions listed. Payment must accompany advertisement order, made payable to the Southeastern Planetarium Association (send payment to Secretary/Treasurer Mickey Jo Sorrell). The underlying mission of our advertisements is to promote resources, products, and services related to the planetarium profession. SEPA reserves the right to refuse advertisements.



SEPA President Adam Thanz

# IPS Report

**John Hare**  
**ASH Enterprises**  
**Bradenton, FL**

By the time you read this, registration forms for the upcoming IPS Conference should be available. Chicago's Adler Planetarium will host the 2008 conference. June 27 to July 2. The conference hotel is the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place.

Conference registration is \$450 and includes 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 2 dinners, all breaks, and the hospitality suite. The IPS Banquet/cruise is an additional \$79.

Optional tours include Fermilab, Amish country/Notre Dame planetarium, and Yerkes Observatory/Milwaukee Public Museum.

Preliminary schedule is as follows:

- 6/27- IPS Council meeting, registration, and welcoming reception.
- 6/28- Keynote speaker, papers, panels, and workshops.
- 6/29- Affiliate meetings, business meeting, vendor

- exhibits and vendor sessions in dome.
- 6/30- Papers, panels, and workshops in morning. Optional Fermilab tour or afternoon on your own.
  - 7/1- Papers, panels, and workshops. Awards lunch. Dome sessions.
  - 7/2- Papers, panels, and workshops. IPS Banquet/cruise and fireworks with a backdrop of the Chicago skyline!

A limited number of scholarships are available to qualifying members. For further information regarding scholarships or about the conference itself, go to the conference web site <<http://ips2008.org>>

You must be an IPS member to attend the conference. Current dues are \$65 for 1 year and \$100 for 2 years. You can join by e-mail. Go to <[www.ips-planetarium.org](http://www.ips-planetarium.org)> Or, contact Shawn Laatsch, IPS Membership Chairman:  
Phone 808-969-9735  
Fax 808-969-9748

The new IPS Directory and Resource Guide was distributed this past fall. The publication was furnished on CD to all IPS members and contains information about every known planetarium worldwide. There is also a large listing of vendors and suppliers of equipment. This resource alone justifies the cost of joining IPS.

# Editor's Message

**James Sullivan**  
**Buehler Planetarium & Observatory**  
**Davie, FL**

Christine Shupla is inviting all interested planetarians to the 2008 Lunar and Planetary Science Conference. It takes place in Houston (League City), Texas, March 10-14 2008. It is hosted by the Lunar and Planetary Institute and the Astromaterials Research and Exploration Science Directorate of NASA's Johnson Space Center. Planetarians are invited to register to attend several free educator workshops being offered by planetary science mission education leads, as well as the free E/PO Forum: *Reaching the Moon*. Registration for the Forum and the workshops is now open at [http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/lpsc\\_2008/](http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/lpsc_2008/). Christine can be reached at (281) 486-2135 or [shupla@lpi.usra.edu](mailto:shupla@lpi.usra.edu).

We wish to welcome aboard Robert Cruz of the Miami Space Transit Planetarium as an Associate Editor, who will be writing a technical column. We have other openings, and if you think you would like to give this a try, we would love to have you. Previous columns include the Bookends column with reviews of astronomy-related print material, and Digital Cosmos about computer-related media. Additional columns (which seem self-explanatory) were AstroVideo Review, AstroWeb Review, and Featured Planetarium.

If you are not up to the full commitment of four col-  
(Continued on page 9)



## Paul Campbell Fellowship Award Nomination Form

Nominees must have been a member of SEPA for at least ten years, and they must display qualities in each of five areas, as represented by the five-pointed star shaped award: integrity, friendship, service, knowledge, and vision. Please submit this form to any SEPA Council member.

Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SEPA Membership Form

Please send your check to SEPA, c/o Mickey Jo Sorrell, Morehead Planetarium & Science Center, CB#3480 UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

\_\_\_\_ One Year, \$25 (\$15 outside SEPA geographical region)

\_\_\_\_ Two Years, \$40

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Planetarium \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State / Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Voice Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Position \_\_\_\_\_

IPS Member? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution to Scholarship Award Account: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# Small Talk

**Elizabeth Wasiluk**  
**Hedgesville High School Planetarium**  
**Hedgesville, WV**

I feel really spoiled because for two columns I have had guest columnists and now I am back to writing this myself.

Here is what has been happening since I last wrote "Small Talk." This year's school year opened up to a fabulous start with the "just before school" total lunar eclipse. The eclipse was timed right for my students to view it before school and for me to watch out of my dining room window while eating breakfast. The next day in school I went to the web and low and behold there was ex-office mate, Jonathan Sabin's lunar eclipse picture from Florida ready to show students in first period. Handy thing that spaceweather.com. I got a beautiful picture in e-mail from Conrad Jung over in the west coast who saw the entire eclipse! Wow! It even got picked up by Astronomy Magazine's picture of the day. Now we will all hope for clear skies in February for the next lunar eclipse.



*Lunar Eclipse of 8/28/07 by Conrad Jung*

Many of the problems that plagued the planetarium this year are continuing in the new school year. Last year gave rise to the great Internet server meltdown. There was some virus that shut down the

entire network in the school. The people from the board office took weeks to get the Internet up and running again. As a result the planetarium lost its Internet connection. At the end of the year there was talk that I would be getting a new computer and the Internet should get restored the next school year. That never happened. Then one day in the beginning of the school year, I accidentally plugged in the Internet to one of my old computers and wha-la, there was Internet. What was that all about? Don't know, but I am keeping it a secret that the Internet has been restored. I still need a computer to show the Internet up on the dome.

Despite the reported teacher walk out (see the installment of "Small Talk" in Spring 2007) and the higher salaries we are supposedly making as a result, it hasn't stopped the exodus of teachers who have left the school and headed to places where the salaries are higher. Me? I am staying put and on October 15, I celebrated 20 years at Berkeley County Planetarium/Hedgesville High School.

One of the great things that happened last year was that in the room outside the planetarium, which is the third art room, some students made some murals. One student named Dedre made a mural in the back of the room with one of those Pikachu characters from the Pokeman cartoons. It is knocking over a can of paint. Not a good thing in a carpeted room.

Right outside the planetarium door is a mural that student Sara Powell did of Spiderman, straight out of the last movie. Spiderman will greet me every time I use that door to the planetarium, from room 31, the now art room. The planetarium has three entrances.

It seemed extremely strange not to be seeing you at the annual summer SEPA conference. But the Triple Conjunction Conference was great fun in



October. It was great seeing all of you and the giant sputnik on someone's car. Dave Hostetter and I went out and did a view of the constellation Cygnus for the participatory program on gauging light pollution in your area. I went with Charles Furguson to the Digitalis program in a dome even smaller than my own and had Halloween skies set as an introduction to seasonal skies. The program gave a unique approach to seasons, but I could do without the pixilated sky.

Coming back from Sunday breakfast, April Whitt and I were treated to a misty blue sun and were relieved it hadn't changed spectral type on us. Hanging out with Hostetter again, I showed him the sun through my brand new PST telescope from Corona that I received by writing a grant to both Berkeley County Schools and Ecolab.

December, I celebrated Mars closest approach with three programs, but only got to do two because of snow. A local administrator would not fill out the form to get her group into the planetarium and I told her that since I had other commitments, I would not do the program. She got pretty mad, but since I am the only person in the planetarium who does programs and since I don't get paid to do anything out of the regular school day, I feel obliged to say no once in a while. Which leads me to ask - I know that some do all nighters to get shows programmed. What was the nuttiest thing you ever did to make sure someone got to see a program? What do you do to persons who want a program, but don't want to fill out necessary forms or go through the appropriate channels to get a program booked? Do you do it anyway or tell them no? I know that I cannot drop everything to schedule a program, and I have other duties besides just the planetarium.

I also saw a new "Star of Bethlehem" DVD out. The same guy who did "The Passion of Christ," Steven McEveety, produces it and my question to you is have you seen it? Is it heavily religious? I am thinking of getting it, but I am unsure that I would use it. If you want to check it out, you can go to [www.ccvideo.com](http://www.ccvideo.com) or order it from them at: Critics Choice Video, P. O. Box 1350, Ottawa, IL 61350-6350, 1-800-367-7765. It costs \$11.96.

Other news is that our work e-mails have been

upgraded to include more space, so you can e-mail me there and not have to worry about the e-mail bouncing back. Contact me using it at [ewasiluk@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:ewasiluk@access.k12.wv.us).

The bad news is that our school web site was updated and the planetarium stuff was inadvertently left off. It still is dangling out there somewhere in cyber space and looks terrible. Having talked to the IT people, they claim they are working on it. It still looks awful. So if you want to help me out, go to the web site: <http://boe.berk.k12.wv.us/501/Planetarium/stars.htm>, stare at it in disgust and email the following and ask for it to be fixed: Sharon Elaine Dove <[sdove@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:sdove@access.k12.wv.us)>, Sharon Leann McPeak <[smcpeak@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:smcpeak@access.k12.wv.us)>. Maybe if I spam the IT people they will "Get around to it."

So keep in touch and contact me with any "Small Talk" issues you might have, especially after the conference. Hope your gate receipts are fabulous and higher gas prices are not a deterrent to visitors under your dome.



*Betty at the Berkeley Planetarium*  
*by Joseph Reidy*

more details in the News from SEPA States, TN region.

SEPA's Council hopes you are enjoying your facilities' copy of *The Planets*. We are proud to provide this program as a service to its members and to the profession as a whole. As a side note related to this program, I wanted to let you know of a potential source of visitation. The on-line trailer for the show was picked up by a website called "Totally Kate." (www.totallykate.com) If you haven't guessed, it's a fan site devoted to the actress Kate Mulgrew, the narrator for *The Planets*. We were not able to provide a copy of the show or any content to any of the fans due to legal restrictions. But, you may want to make contact to local fan groups of Star Trek, Science Fiction, etc. about your showing of *The Planets*. Kate Mulgrew's connection definitely helps with publicity.

SEPA will be busy this year as well. My last journal entry brought forth the need for full SEPA members to step forward and put their name in for elections. This happens on even years. I want to thank the Presidential Search Committee for helping with this task. The Committee is Max McKelvey, Drew Gilmore, and Woodrow Grizzle, with Max heading the group. I know of at least one person running for the president's position. I also know that both John Hare will run for IPS representative and Mickey Jo Sorrell will run for Secretary/Treasurer. If you would like to put forth your name for any of these three positions, you can do so as late as the SEPA pre-business meeting held during the SEPA conference in Lafayette, LA in late July. I thank all the candidates for willing to help SEPA with these important positions.

Another selection during the 2008 conference will be for the conference site in 2010. If you are interested in vying to host this event, please submit your request to Council. It is a chance to not only show off your facility and staff, but to work very hard to organize five days of activities. In all, it takes about a year of work for all the planning and its execution. An article describing your bid will be needed for the next journal, due on April 1, 2008. Again, you can put your name in as late as the 2008 conference pre-business meeting.

A while ago, I wrote about my wife and I building a log home on our property. As of the beginning of 2008, we are awaiting a few dry days to dig a ditch for the power line. Once that happens, we can gravel the road and construction can commence. Because of the extent of the driveway and dealing with extreme steepness, we had to move a lot of dirt to make it reasonably steep. With gravel, it will be drivable by any vehicle. We have been working towards the goal of building a log home for about fifteen years. We're happy that we're on the cusp of actual building.



The view of the TN/NC border from our future house site.

Some reminders: If you know of someone in SEPA who you think is worthy of earning the Paul Campbell Award, SEPA's highest recognition, then please submit a statement to the SEPA Council. The guidelines state that a nomination needs to be in writing describing why that person deserves the award. The nominee needs to have been a member for at least ten years and represents these five points: integrity, friendship, service, knowledge, and vision. The statement not only needs to address those five points, but also needs to be signed by five SEPA members. It is never too late to nominate, so please consider doing so. A member is not awarded every year due to its special nature. Maybe 2008 will provide the next recipient.

If you have something to advertise, then you can do so with our journal. It's easy and we have very low rates. Payments are sent to Mickey Jo Sorrell and the ad gets sent to James Sullivan. Prices and ad dimensions can be found in the journal. Why,

we even give a 10% discount for four consecutive ads!

Please, if you have something special to share about your facility, an activity you did with the public, a way to fix a piece of equipment, etc., then send in an article to James Sullivan. He is the editor of YOUR journal. He is not the author. The journal is a great way to share with your colleagues other than the annual conference. Not everyone can attend the conference, so reach out to all of your fellow members. If you have some news that would best fit the format of the State News section, then send something to your state representative. State representatives, you too can solicit from facilities in your state. Drop them a line about a month before the deadline for each journal. I can't believe nothing really cool is happening out there in every one of the facilities in the SEPA region. To sound like Thomas Jefferson, our job's coolness factor is self-evident. Let everyone else know about it!

I also want to see if any of you can reach out to a neighboring facility that may not have a SEPA member. There have been a number of changes to personnel in most of the facilities in our region within the last five years. More will come. They may not know of SEPA. If they can become a part of this rare profession in a larger scale, then they won't feel alone and will more likely stay in the profession. I recently contacted Sonya Wood Mahler from Land Between the Lakes in Kentucky about what type of seats they had. Upon discussion with her, I found out that she was in a different scientific field in their school system and had just started in the planetarium six months earlier! She did not know about SEPA, nor *The Planets* show she could get for free if she signed up by the end of 2007. She let me know about a week later that she signed up to be a member! I know she can get a lot out of SEPA, its journal, and its conference. We are more of a family than an "organization." Do your part by inviting someone in.

umns a year, consider writing and sending in articles. An article can be on any Planetarium-community related topic.

Way back when in 1986, in *Southern Skies* volume 6, issue #2, on pages 3 and 4 was the statement, "This page intentionally left blank." Thomas W. Hocking, editor, wrote, "What you see is what I got." He also put down that "Just a reminder -- I edit the stuff, I don't invent it." He goes on in editorial tradition to ask that stuff be sent in. I echo that sentiment. Please.

We can receive electronic files in most any format. Also, graphics can be received electronically or in hardcopy, including slides or photos, and will be converted to digital with sufficient resolution.

Submission deadlines: January 1 (Winter), April 1 (Spring), July 1 (Summer), October 1 (Fall).

Thanks to BCC and its wonderful printing department for assistance.

A BAYS MOUNTAIN PLANETARIUM PRODUCTION  
**THE CASE OF THE DISAPPEARING PLUTO**

A radio announcement... an excited phone call... and our sly gumshoe, Skye Watcher, is on the case. Explore with Skye and discover what happened to the ex-planet Pluto as she tracks down clues that stretch back hundreds of years! Audiences will have great fun with this brand-new, unique program that looks into the changing status of planets in our Solar System.

We're proud to present this program for public leasing at an affordable price. You will receive all the digital content on DVD complete with video, soundtrack, digital still visuals, script, and much more.

Permanent Domes: \$499  
 Portable Domes: \$199

Nose out the details on our website: [www.baysmountain.com](http://www.baysmountain.com) or ring us up: (423) 229-9447



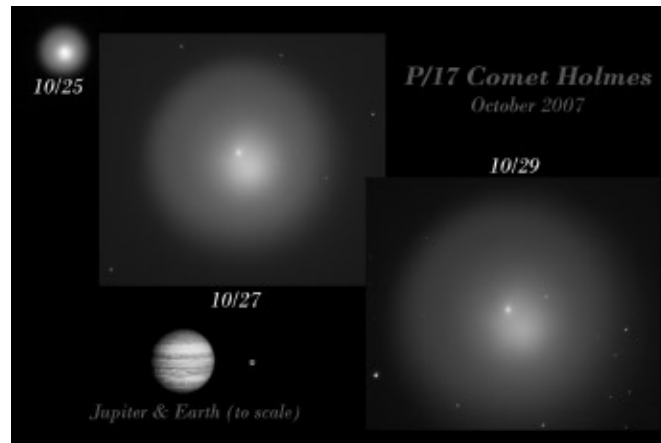
# Comet Holmes



*Wide Field by George Fleenor,  
Nov. 14, 2007.*

*Nikon D-100, Nikkor 180mm,  
f-2.8 lens, ISO 200*

*90 sec single exposure  
Piggyback on 16" DOB*



*Composite by Conrad Jung, 10/25/07,  
10/27/07, and 10/29/07.*

**GeoGraphics Imaging & Consulting**

- Custom Animations Available
- Large Variety of Astronomical Animations
- Special Effect Animation Disks (Starting at \$695.00)
- Featuring the talents of Joe Tucciarone
- Traditional Star Shows & Content
- Full Dome Star Shows & Content

[www.geographicsimaging.com](http://www.geographicsimaging.com)

7803 25th Ave W. Bradenton, FL 34209  
Ph (941) 920-0246 Fax (941) 794-6877

# SEPA Candidates

**Candidate for President-Elect  
Kelly Herbst  
Virginia Living Museum  
Planetarium  
Newport News, VA**

I am honored to be asked to serve as President of SEPA, and more than a little humbled! I feel I still have so much to learn about the universe, and about our profession. And yet, this is clearly one thing that unites us all - a love of learning. I've never met a planetarian who wasn't actively involved in learning something...and eager to share that new knowledge as well.

Born and raised in New York City, my first planetarium was the classic Hayden in the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan. I say it was mine, because I practically lived there. I got to work in my first planetarium while earning my undergraduate degree in physics at Wagner College in New York. I began working at the Virginia Living Museum planetarium as a volunteer while earning my Ph.D. in theoretical nuclear physics from the College of William and Mary. I am now the Astronomy Curator for the Virginia Living Museum, which involves everything from producing my own shows to writing articles about astronomy for local newspapers. I am a member of IPS, the NASA Museum Alliance, a Patricia Roberts Harris Fellow, and 3-time winner of the "Best TA" award at William and Mary (as chosen by students!).

Planetariums have been part of my life for a long time. Two of the theaters in which I spent so much time are now gone. The old Hayden is now a beautiful new Hayden and the Rose Center for Earth and Space, which is marvelous. Sadly, the little theater from my col-

(Continued on page 12)

**Candidate for President-Elect  
April Whitt  
Fernbank Science Center  
Atlanta, GA**

A few days ago, some colleagues and I were discussing upcoming planetarium programming and this summer's space camp, and I suddenly thought, "This is so much fun. And I'm getting paid for it!" We planetarians are a lucky lot.

We have the entire known universe for program content, round rooms full of cool gadgets to teach in, and the favorite subject (besides dinosaurs) of every kid on the planet. We're the ones who get the phone calls from the media, whether there's a new comet, a space craft on its way to the outer reaches of the solar system, or the opportunity to see Mars "as big as the full moon."

I was fortunate enough to stumble (quite literally) into the planetarium field as an undergraduate in college, where the State University of New York at Fredonia had a Spitz A3P in a 30-ft. dome, and one carousel projector. Graduate school at UNC-Chapel Hill was through a scholarship and internship at Morehead Planetarium, during which I attended my first SEPA conference, back in the last millennium. When my husband's graduate school landed us in Princeton, New Jersey, I got to work with Dr. Gerry O'Neill and the Space Studies Institute. When we moved to Chicago, there was an opening at Adler and a chance to work with the wonderful staff there. And when we moved to Atlanta and I attended the 1994 SEPA conference in Charlotte, where John Hare said, "Welcome home."

What a great profession. And what great col-

(Continued on page 12)

lege days did not survive the graduation of our crazy team who got it working again, and that space is now a computer lab. The story of those two theaters parallels what is happening throughout our community - some theaters survive and even thrive, while others are dying away in our new world of digital technology, techno-savvy audiences, and shrinking budgets. Even now, I am working to try to keep my current theater alive and healthy as these pressures take their toll. As President of SEPA, I would like to encourage us to work to find new ways to excite the public about science and make the planetarium experience a relevant one to a new generation of children and their parents.

In addition to life under the dome, I have a wonderful husband of 11 years and we are the proud parents of the cutest 4-year-old girl ever to come out of China. I enjoy singing, reading, and am still an avid gamer. In short, I'm a girl geek, and loving it. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to serve a community I love so greatly!

**Candidate for Secretary-Treasurer  
Mickey Jo Sorrell  
Morehead Planetarium & Science Center, Chapel Hill, NC**

Mickey Jo Sorrell, current Secretary/Treasurer for SEPA - I am a proud new grandmother, as well as an educator at Morehead Planetarium and Science Center (Chapel Hill, NC) for almost seven years. My degree (UNC-Chapel Hill) is in Geological Sciences. I also serve on the board of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina. I'm a gardener, biker, walker, and guardian of two spoiled chickens. I love spending time with third graders, especially under a starry sky. Keeping up with SEPA memberships and helping to distribute *The Planets* has enabled me to get to know many of you. I appreciate the confidence you have placed in me and would be proud to serve another two years in this capacity.

leagues.

I would like to see SEPA strengthen support to the membership. We have produced and distributed planetarium programs. We have a great web site that could provide access to scripts and educational materials. Our members are Solar System Ambassadors and MESSENGER Fellows and talented artists, writers and musicians. Each of us has something to offer, and I'd like to see more of us get involved with SEPA.



**Candidate for IPS Representative  
John Hare  
Ash Enterprises  
Bradenton, FL**

I have been involved in the planetarium profession since the early 1960s. I was on staff at Abrams Planetarium at Michigan State University where we played a key role in the formation of GLPA and was an integral part of the team that helped organize the founding meeting of IPS, the CAPE conference, hosted by Abrams. In the late '70s I became director of the Bishop Planetarium in Bradenton where I hosted two SEPA conferences. I served as president of SEPA in 1985-86. Since leaving my position as director of the Bishop Planetarium in 1996, I have continued to be involved in the professional activities of various planetarium organizations and the planetarium field in general. I continue to present talks, workshops, and papers that deal with various topics of interest to the planetarium community and frequently attend regional planetarium conferences in North America and elsewhere. My extensive travels have built a worldwide network of planetarium friends and contacts.

I have been a participant in all SEPA Conferences since 1979 and all IPS Conferences since their initial conference in 1972. IPS conducts IPS Council meetings at the conference venue during conference years and at various other strategic sites during off-conference years. I have participated in all IPS Council meetings since 1990 and occasional others dating back to 1984, so am well versed in the business affairs of the Organization.

I am planning to attend the 2008 IPS conference in Chicago.

*Professional affiliation:*  
International Planetarium Society (IPS), member since 1971  
IPS Historian, 1990 to present  
Southeastern Planetarium Association (SEPA), member since 1979  
President 1985-86  
Conference host 1984 and 1993  
IPS Council Representative 1984-86, 1993 to present

Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society (MAPS), member since 1996  
Great Lakes Planetarium Association (GLPA), member since 1996  
Great Plains Planetarium Association (GPPA), member since 1996  
Rocky Mountain Planetarium Association (RMPA), member since 1997  
Pacific Planetarium Association (PPA), member since 1998  
Southwestern Planetarium Association (SWAP), member since 2002

*Professional recognition:*  
IPS Fellow, 1986-present  
IPS Service Award, 2000  
SEPA Paul Campbell Fellowship Award, 2001  
GLPA Armand Spitz Lecturer 1996  
GLPA Fellow, 2003-present

My plans are to remain as active as always within the profession and consequently feel that I can continue to make significant contributions on behalf of SEPA as IPS Council Representative.

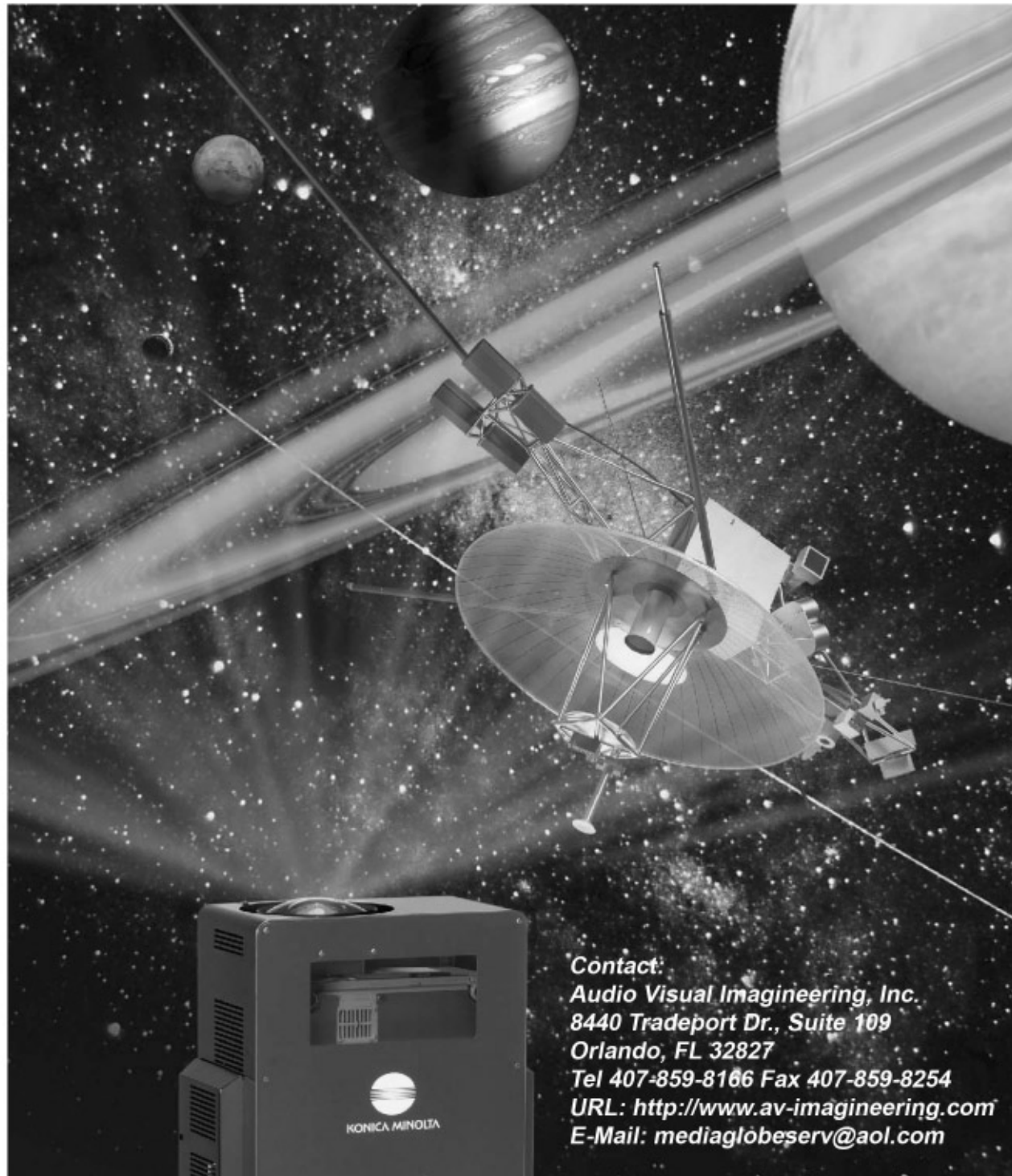
I would be honored to continue in that role.





Explore the Universe with 3-D Astronomical Simulation  
A Compact and Powerful Full-Dome Projection System

# MEDIAGLOBE-II



Contact:  
Audio Visual Imagineering, Inc.  
8440 Tradeport Dr., Suite 109  
Orlando, FL 32827  
Tel 407-859-8166 Fax 407-859-8254  
URL: <http://www.av-imagineering.com>  
E-Mail: [mediaglobeserv@aol.com](mailto:mediaglobeserv@aol.com)

Minutes to learn - light years to explore!

# News From SEPA States

and these shows include *The People, Endless Horizon, 2061: The Secrets of Mars*, and *To Worlds Unknown*.

The Buehler Observatory has viewing four times a week. It has free public observing Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings. In addition, we observe the Sun on Wednesday afternoons. We often have one telescope set up to view sunspots, and watch flares through a Hydrogen-Alpha filter on another.

**FLORIDA** 

contact: George Fleenor  
GeoGraphics Imaging and  
Consulting, Bradenton, FL  
[Jetson1959@aol.com](mailto:Jetson1959@aol.com)

**Florida Planetarium Association  
(FLORPLAN)**

Contact George Fleenor for details.

**Schoolhouse Children's Museum  
Boynton Beach, FL**

George Fleenor reports: The Schoolhouse Children's Museum and the City of Boynton Beach will be holding a Total Lunar Eclipse Viewing on February 20. NASA-certified instructor Erich Landstrom will lead educational activities along with telescope viewings, storytelling, and crafts for little ones.

**Buehler Planetarium  
Broward Community College  
Davie, FL**

Susan J. Barnett reports: The Buehler Planetarium & Observatory is running public shows four days a week. The weekend shows and monthly specials include *Teddy's Quest*, *Seeing the Invisible Universe*, *The Shuttle Show*, *African Skylore* and *Women Hold Up Half the Sky*.

We continue to rotate shows on Wednesdays,

**Planetarium  
University of South Florida  
Tampa, FL**

John Hare reports: Joe Carr passed away on January 4th. Joe was the long time director of the University of South Florida Planetarium. Upon his retirement the planetarium was moved to the Museum of Science and Industry, across the street in Tampa where it remains in heavy usage to this day.

**NORTH CAROLINA** 

contact: Patsy Wilson  
Woodson Planetarium, Salisbury, NC  
[wilsonpk@rss.k12.nc.us](mailto:wilsonpk@rss.k12.nc.us)

**Millholland Planetarium  
Catawba Science Center  
Hickory, NC**

Curt Spivey reports: Our first three months have been a smashing success! The Konica Minolta MediaGlobe II has been performing beautifully - and most of our visitors can't believe something like this has come to Hickory. The shows have been so popular that 5 additional shows have been added to our schedule to meet weekend demand.

Our initial offerings include the DMNS show *Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity*, the Softmachine production of *Kalouoka'Hina: The Enchanted Reef* (which ties in nicely with our new aquaria that share the building with the planetarium), and our



look around the night sky called *Catawba Sky*. For the holiday season we added AVI's *Laser Holidays* to the mix, which is a runaway hit with many, many sellouts!

We have also developed school shows for grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12 that meet the NC Content Standards for those grades. Our initial response has been excellent from teachers, and we are already looking forward to a busy spring.

In January, we are adding National Space Centre's *SETI* to the lineup as well as the laser show, *Dark Side of the Moon*. In February, we'll run *Laser Beatles*, followed by *Laser U2* on St. Patrick's Day (Irish band, you know).

Finally, on December 5th we had the honor of a visit from Yasushi Imai, President of Konica Minolta Planetarium Co., Shigeru Tanaka, Head of North American Sales, and Hideki Hayashi, Quality Control Manager. Our equipment is the first US installation they have seen! I am delighted to be working with such a great organization, and look forward to continued success as we move forward.

If any of you SEPA-ites are in the Charlotte area, stop by for a visit!

**PARI StarLab  
Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute  
Rosman, NC**

Bob Hayward reports: Regularly scheduled activities continue to move along very well. PARI's monthly "Evening at PARI" public lecture series is growing in popularity with the local community and often is attended by overflow crowds. Each session consists of a campus tour, followed by a lecture and then observing, weather permitting. The November session was a basic discussion of telescopes to help people learn enough about telescopes to purchase one for Christmas. In January participants will bring their telescopes so that PARI staff and volunteers and members of the Asheville Astronomy Club can assist them with operational skills. "Evening at PARI" will move to the second Friday of each month in 2008.

Christi Whitworth continues to take the giant dome

STARLAB to schools throughout Western North Carolina and Upstate South Carolina. She is also making regular visits to the Boys and Girls Club in Brevard under a grant from the Transylvania County United Way. In November we had another very successful "Homeschool Day" at PARI in which participants had the opportunity to visit our STARLAB and learn astronomy with other activities during the day.

Christi represented PARI at the Triple Conjunction in WV in October. Hopefully, many of you got to meet her and put a face with the name. Beth Harris recently attended the Astronomy from the Ground up Workshop for Informal Educators. (We'll make an astronomer out of her sooner or later!) Both Christi and Beth attended the North Carolina Science Teachers Association Conference in Greensboro in November where they made several presentations.

The ROBOTS - Robotics: Opportunities for Building Outstanding Talent in the Sciences - program for teachers continues to expand with several workshops scheduled in the new year in the Charlotte and Chapel Hill areas for the North Carolina - Math, Science Education Network (NC-MSEN). These workshops will focus especially on Mars. There is also an SGRA - School of Galactic Radio Astronomy - workshop scheduled in Raleigh in February.

Bob Hayward continues on the PARI staff part-time primarily producing written materials in various forms, e.g., press releases, "Mountain Skies" column for the local paper, etc. In the new year he will start a regular "Sky Watch" column in *The Naturalist*, a publication of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences.

**Margaret C. Woodson Planetarium  
Horizons Unlimited, Rowan-Salisbury Schools  
Salisbury, NC**

Patsy Wilson reports: The Woodson Planetarium has entered Kindergarten season. Each day during the month of January our facility devotes its programming for them, with all the Kindergarten classes from a school attending on the same day. Immediately following the completion of this season, we

head straight into first grade programming with a similar, but longer daily programming schedule. It gets a little tedious teaching the same grade level and the same program day after day, but it's the quickest way to handle these groups.

Horizons Unlimited celebrated its 40th birthday in November with a special opening. Hands-on Astronomy activities from the ASP were available for families who attended. In addition, the planetarium premiered *Laser Holidays* from AVI during that event to capacity crowds. The show also aired numerous times during the month of December by special request of various community groups.



**DuPont Planetarium  
Ruth Patrick Science Ed. Ctr. , USC  
Aiken, SC**

News from the DuPont Planetarium: The DuPont Planetarium at the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC) on the campus of the University of South Carolina Aiken had a very successful Christmas season with the annual presentation of *Tis the Season*, from Lochness Productions. It was nice to have the Bechtel Telescope available for people to view the heavens. Last year at this time, our 16" Meade LX-200 was in California undergoing repairs.

The RPSEC is named after Dr. Ruth Patrick, an internationally renowned scientist who conducted studies on freshwater ecosystems. On November 26, 2007, Dr. Patrick celebrated her 100th birthday. The Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences hosted a special dinner in her honor and our director, Dr. Gary Senn, was able to attend the event. Dr. Patrick still goes to her office each day for a few hours. She is completing her 5th book in a five volume series called *Rivers of the United States*.

In January, we presented *Dark Shadows*, a local production that describes how "dark shadows" are responsible for the phases of the Moon and for solar and lunar eclipses. We also presented *Larry Cat in Space* by Lochness Productions.

In February, we will show *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, based on the program by the New Jersey State Museum Planetarium and the Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium. We updated the script somewhat to make it a little longer and to include some more astronomy. We also address some of the concerns that others have expressed about the accuracy of the facts in the show surrounding the song and the Underground Railroad. For school groups, we also will show *The Explorers of Mauna Kea* produced by the Bishop Planetarium in Hawaii.

*Mission to Mars* is a local production that we will be presenting in March. This show follows a standard, live, night sky presentation. This taped show begins as the night sky presentation ends with a question from an "audience member." *Mission to Mars* continues as an interactive discussion between the "audience member" and the "planetarium presenter." The show presents information about a number of missions to Mars including information about the rovers. In March, we will also present *Journey Into the Living Cell* from the Buhl Planetarium and Carnegie Science Center. These shows will be available to both school groups and the public.

**Settlemyre Planetarium  
Museum of York County  
Rock Hill, SC**

Glenn Dantzler reports: the Settlemyre Planetarium had a very successful fall school season. Our holiday attendance was high as we offered *Season of Light*. During January and February we will be offering *Follow the Drinking Gourd* as well as our live sky shows. We also had the good luck of finally getting new carpet in the planetarium and a steam cleaning of our seats. We also are in the middle planning stages for a new 40 foot full dome planetarium! Wish us luck.

That's about it for South Carolina and may all of you have a great second semester with your school groups.

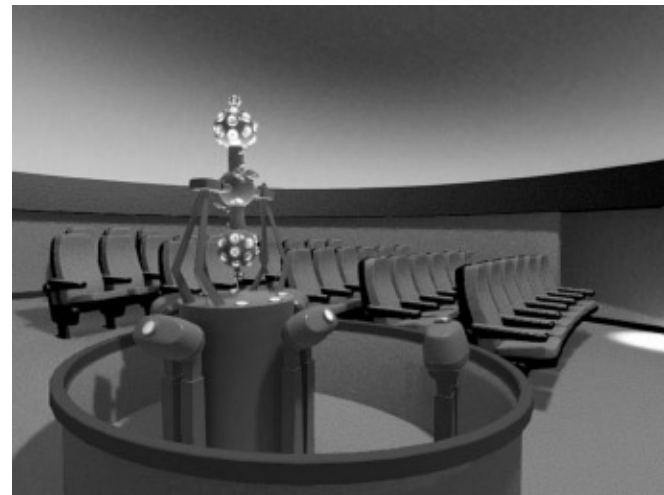
## TENNESSEE

contact: Kris McCall  
Sudekum Planetarium  
Nashville, TN  
krismccall@adventuresci.com



### Bays Mountain Planetarium Kingsport, TN

Adam Thanz reports: The days are not long enough for all the projects we need to finish here at Bays Mountain. Some of you know of what I speak. In this time of planetarians deciding what to do with their aging equipment, we too, are facing that threshold. I am glad to say that the City of Kingsport (who owns and runs our Park), has decided to not only refurbish our theater, but to purchase both an optical/mechanical star projector and a full-dome video system. We did not want to lose our optical stars, and we also wanted to capitalize on the advanced technology of full-dome. After a lot of research, we have decided on a Zeiss ZKP4 with the Spacegate Quinto. There are other systems out there that are quite worthy, but this system best fit our needs. You may choose otherwise based on your needs. Regardless, we are very excited about our future. Based on our new floor design, we will be much more visible as we will have just a small desk up front with small, mobile interfaces for theater control. Our current console occupies about nine seats worth of space in the back. We feel that the



operator should not only be visible, but also provide interaction with the audience. We are an alternative classroom, after all. In addition, we will be redesigning the entranceway so you can enter from the front of the theater. The floor will be slightly sloped to better accommodate seeing a speaker as well as increasing the feeling of immersion within the dome. There will be carpeting and recessed lights for ambiance. Our 37 year old seats with original fabric will also be replaced. The dome surface will be replaced with a seamless design (final choice not made, yet) as our current one has buckles and a big rectangular hole cut out at the back. In order to control costs, we will be keeping the original dome framework that holds our current surface. The sound system will be replaced with a 5.1 surround system that will enhance the viewer's experience. One of Jason's previous careers was being a sound engineer, so he is making sure we get the best system for our needs. Other enhancements will be addressing electrical needs and cleaning ductwork and sealing its leaks. Excessive dust is caused by this. I have not mentioned this project to most people since I wanted to wait first to see if the funding came through and then wanted to wait for the main system to be chosen. We plan on closing sometime in the spring and then reopen in late summer/early fall of 2008.

We are currently running *The Planets* in our theater as our public show. This is the SEPA-produced planetarium show that is still available for an extremely low cost. We at Bays Mountain hope you find this show most worthwhile and easy to install. We worked hard on the visuals and its distribution package. If you have any questions about installing the show, don't hesitate to contact us. February will start with programming from our past as it will be the last show we give that is slide-based. Alas, having full-dome video does not mean one must fill the dome with imagery all the time. It is only a tool like a planetarium or a slide projector.

For many, many years, March has seen the commencement of our evening StarWatch night viewings and our daytime solar viewing called Sun-Watch. This year is no different. It's interesting how some of our viewings have ten to twenty visitors, and some have thirty to sixty! This is true for both the solar and nighttime viewings. Our astron-

omy club members are the heart of these viewings and Bays Mountain truly values their volunteerism. Another astronomy club activity from our club is an annual October star party called StarFest. It attracts about 100 amateur astronomers (and planetarians) from throughout the southeast U.S. The 2007 StarFest had Doug Gegen from Roper Mountain as our main speaker. He did a great job recounting the history and reborn life of their 23" Alvan Clark refractor. 2008 will bring about

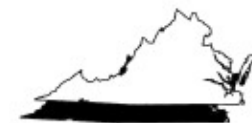


StarFest's 25th anniversary! Jason Dorfman has agreed to head up this silver edition and is already planning a great schedule of events. If you want to see what all the buzz is about,

make sure you are on our mailing list to get a registration form. Just e-mail us your address and you'll get a form in August. Remember, you must pre-register to attend.

## VIRGINIA

contact: Dave Maness  
Virginia Living Museum  
Newport News, VA  
david.maness@valivingmuseum



### Virginia Living Museum Planetarium Newport News, VA

Kelly Herbst reports: By the time you read this, another run of *Star of Wonder* will have concluded. We have many guests who come for this traditional show each year, and have done so since they were little children. It's always a welcome sign of the Christmas season.

We continue to try to make plans for our upgrade under shifting budget conditions. We, like so many

other museums, were not included in the governor's budget for the coming biennium. The future continues to be very hazy, but we are hanging in there.

February will be a wild month for us: we will once again open the theater to the public for limited showings of *Follow the Drinking Gourd* as part of our Black History Month celebrations. In addition, February 16-18 is Reptile Weekend at our museum, and we will once again present the live program *A Sky Full of...Scales?* in support of the effort. There's also the small matter of a total lunar eclipse on February 20th - first fully visible one in a long while! We're looking forward to hosting another of our popular Total Luna-See events once again.

School programs will begin their annual upswing soon and keep us busy throughout the Spring. Chat with you again then!

### Planetarium Old Dominion University Norfolk, VA

Bruce Hanna reports: Well I guess the big news at the O.D.U. Planetarium is that I have announced my plans to retire in Jan. 2009. As soon as the position is approved by the administration here on campus will be looking for a person capable of teaching college level astronomy and conducting shows for the public in our 40 foot dome with a Spitz A3P sky projector. Any questions about the position can be directed towards

Bruce Hanna  
Dept of Physics  
Old Dominion University  
4600 Elkhorn Ave  
Norfolk, Virginia 23529

### Thomas Jefferson HS Planetarium Richmond, VA

Leslie Bochenski reports: We're looking forward to a visit from ASH Enterprises during January for routine maintenance on the ol' Viewlex, in preparation for a very busy spring schedule of programs for 3rd, 4th, 6th and 9th grade students. They're keeping me busy!

# Bowen Technovation

designers of electronic media

7999 East 88th Street Indianapolis, IN 46256  
317.863.0525



## Applications

- 5.1 / 7.1 AstroFXAudio Systems
- AstroFXAurora Specialty LED Lighting
- AstroFXCommander Master Control Systems
- AstroFXCreator Production Workstations
- ExhibitFX Interactive Lobbies & Exhibits
- Digital & Optical Projection Systems
- Domed Theaters & Flat Screens
- 3D Stereoscopic Theaters



## Services

- Consulting, Design, & Engineering
- System Provision & Installation
- Training & Support
- Acoustic & Noise Control Planning
- 5.1 / 7.1 Audio System Calibration & Tuning



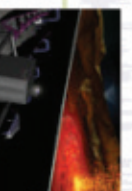
## Technology for Domed Theaters and Exhibits



**IUPUI Informatics**  
Indianapolis, IN  
Internet II HQ 3D Theater



**Shanghai Museum of Science and Technology**  
Shanghai, China  
40' Domed Theater



**Virginia Beach, VA**  
**Tidewater Community College Planetarium**  
125 seat, 40' Planetarium



**San Jose, CA**  
**Independence High School Planetarium**  
Planetarium Audio & Video Systems



**Nashville, TN**  
**Adventure Science Center**  
Interactive Exhibit & Planetarium Systems



**Chicago, IL**  
**Adler Planetarium**  
Planetarium Audio Systems & 3D Theater

[www.bowentechnovation.com/planetarium](http://www.bowentechnovation.com/planetarium)

[www.bowentechnovation.com/exhibit](http://www.bowentechnovation.com/exhibit)

Providing unique visitor and educational experiences since 1985