



CONSTELLATION

The newsletter of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society



The BIG story...

MAPS 2024 Elections for Board of Directors

Next month, MAPS members will be asked to cast their votes for three members of our Executive Committee. This is an opportunity for the membership at-large to help shape the Board that helps to shape our great organization!

We have five extremely-qualified candidates who are asking for consideration for the three positions as MAPS Directors. Deeper into this issue of our quarterly newsletter, you will find short biographies of these individuals. Please take a moment to read what each one has to say, and start to think about how you will cast your votes when the ballots arrive on January 1 of next year.

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Message from the MAPS President

by Noreen Grice

Dear fellow planetarians,

As we transition from the Thanksgiving holiday and approach the winter solstice, I wanted to share my gratitude to you for being part of our wonderful organization. You bring your dedication and love of teaching about our universe to learners of all ages and abilities. How many people can say that they get excited about spending a day with crowds, repeating lessons and presenting shows multiple times a day? We do! When someone tells you, “I never understood the phases of the Moon until you explained it to me,” we feel a sense of joy inside that we have made a difference in someone’s understanding. Yes, planetarians are a special type of person, and I’m so glad that you are part of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society!

Hopefully, you have noticed the “Save the Date” announcements (over the MAPS.io listserv, on Facebook or by email) for a special upcoming ALL MAPS Members Zoom Meeting at 7 p.m. on January 15, 2024. This is not in place of a MAPS conference but rather, in addition to it! We are going to get together on Zoom (just like we did over Dome Dialogues during the COVID shutdown), so we can reconnect with everyone. Our membership is spread out geographically with most members located between Maine and Georgia and west to The Great Lakes. And our members work in diverse locations. We represent the planetarium field as mobile dome users, in nature center and museum planetariums,

college and university planetariums, K-12 planetariums, and as planetarium educators and consultants who may work in a planetarium or may be unaffiliated planetarians who are currently not working in a specific dome.

To help MAPS members connect with other MAPS members who share a similar planetarium environment, we’ve created affinity groups. Each of these groups has different planetarium strategies where people “speak the same planetarium language.”

For example, if you work in a mobile dome and talk with a person who also works in a mobile dome, you speak the “same language” of mobile dome users!

That’s why we have created the affinity groups – so you can connect with like-minded colleagues and help each other. When you renew your MAPS membership, we ask you to identify an affinity group that matches your planetarium work or interest. If you are retired and would like to mentor other planetarians, please join the group of your choice! You will have a chance to meet and join an affinity group at our January 15th Zoom Members’ meeting. You can join more than one affinity group, too. We want you and we need you!

Message from the MAPS President

by Noreen Grice (continued from previous page)

The January Zoom meeting will not be a one-time event. We plan to have multiple ALL MAPS Members Meetings each year to keep everyone apprised of organizational news and share educational materials and events that help everyone. And this will be a good opportunity to hear your thoughts and ideas, and get feedback on how we can best meet the needs of our members.

The Centennial Year is in full swing, and I'm sure that MAPS members will be headed to Germany for the big IPS Conference. However, we know that the expense to attend this international conference, in terms of time and money, will be challenging fiscally, especially for those who don't have big budgets. Because our organization is so diverse, we want to be sure that members have an opportunity to attend a planetarium conference, whether abroad or more locally. For this reason, MAPS will also be hosting a conference in 2024. We've made some changes on the previously-announced date, and we'll have more information to share at the ALL-MAPS Members Meeting on January 15th – so that's another reason to attend the Zoom meeting from the comfort of your home!

As I close this message, I want to thank you again for your commitment to planetarium education and your continued membership with the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society. By the way, if you haven't renewed your membership for 2024, please do! We are not MAPS without you!

Wishing you a wonderful, safe and happy holiday Season,

Sincerely,

Noreen Grice, President
The Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society



MAPS Executive Committee

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Lanham, MD

The *Constellation* is the newsletter of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society (MAPS). It is published four times a year near the equinoxes and solstices. To submit an article or ad, please contact us at publications@mapsplanetarium.org.

Connect with MAPS!



SAVE THE DATE

for a MAPS virtual members meeting on Monday, January 15, 2024. The meeting will start at 7:00 PM. A zoom link will be sent out to all members soon.

Eclipse Stories

Tales of a New Eclipse Chaser: The Great Escape to 2023 Annularity

by Tim Collins

It was Friday the 13th. I was sitting in my home office, putting the final touches on a short segment I was giving that night for our amateur astronomy club. The segment is called “What’s Up,” and it features a club member giving a brief, but more in-depth look at what can be seen in telescopes for the next 30 days. Of course, the annular eclipse was in the forefront, since it was only 21 hours away. Here, we had a 27% partial eclipse, but it was to be our springboard into the final push for totality in April: A kickoff to showing everyone the majesty of the Moon passing in front of the Sun, with the caveat that April would be even better.

But, October in Buffalo can be tricky. Typically, our overcast fall weather patterns do not start until near the end of the month, but on this day, and on eclipse day, heavy rain was expected over the entire area. This usually means that the general public will be dissuaded from attending any events we had set up. The backup plan of course was to broadcast annularity on the observatory monitors. Knowing that there was zero chance that any of us were going to see the partial, it certainly set the pessimistic mood.

However, at 2:30 pm there was a knock on my office door. Still trying to scrounge

up any optimism for the meeting that night, I found that it was my eldest daughter, Rebecca, at my door. “Dad?” she cautiously approached. “If I could find you a plane ticket to Reno for \$615 round trip today, would that be good?”

Somewhat incredulous, I had Rebecca come to the other side of the desk. I thought to myself, “Now how about that, imagine if I did escape.” She brought her phone over to me and I looked at the details of the flight. It departed Buffalo-Niagara International Airport at 5:50 pm, went through O’Hare airport, and then landed in Reno at 10:11 pm Pacific. Now, for the average traveler, that would be insane; however, the reason Rebecca chose Reno as a destination is because her cousin happens to be a NOAA meteorologist there.

Have you ever been outside on a cloudy night, waiting to see something like a total lunar eclipse, or a major meteor shower, and you go inside feeling dismal and depressed, only to return half an hour later to find a clear sky? Seeing the cost of the flight, the landing time, and the “inside” track of having someone in the area made me feel like my internal clouds were parting! I quickly began a text thread with my nephew, Justin...

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Eclipse Stories

Tales of a New Eclipse Chaser: The Great Escape to 2023 Annularity

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Tim: Hey, are you there?

Justin: I'm here at work!

Tim: Quick question. Are you going to watch the eclipse tomorrow?

Justin: That's the plan! Looks like some cirrus clouds will be overhead.... Hopefully they'll be thin enough!

Tim: Well, would you like some company?

<17 minute pause, presumably wondering why he had blanked out for 17 minutes?>

Justin: yeah sure! We are going to be driving up tomorrow morning and wouldn't mind company.

Tim: Can you find me a hotel nearby and get me from the airport at 10?

Justin: Yeah! I'll be awake tonight, then I have the day off tomorrow and I have the evening shift on Sunday.

With that, I quickly began to change all my plans. I contacted my backup for the astronomy club presentation, contacted the club president, and once the reasons for my sudden cancellation were known, I was getting positive feedback from everyone. By 3:45, I had my reservation confirmed. By 4:30, I was packed for a weekend trip to Reno!

On the way, I passed through the weather system headed to Buffalo for the next day: definitely heavy rain. A delay in arrival to the gate at O'Hare almost put a major dent in my trip, but luckily the connecting flight was delayed as a result. My 10:10 landing was changed to 10:45, but still reasonable enough! At 11:00pm Reno time, my nephew was waiting for me in the pickup zone. Having no checked bags, he took me straight to the hotel, which was 15 minutes from his apartment.

I went straight to bed after gathering my items for the next day. I had to adjust to the eclipse time now being in the 9am hour rather than the 12pm hour of course, and Justin informed me that he and his girlfriend Meghan would pick me up between 5:30 and 6:00 to start our drive: 2ish hours east across I-80 to Winnemucca.

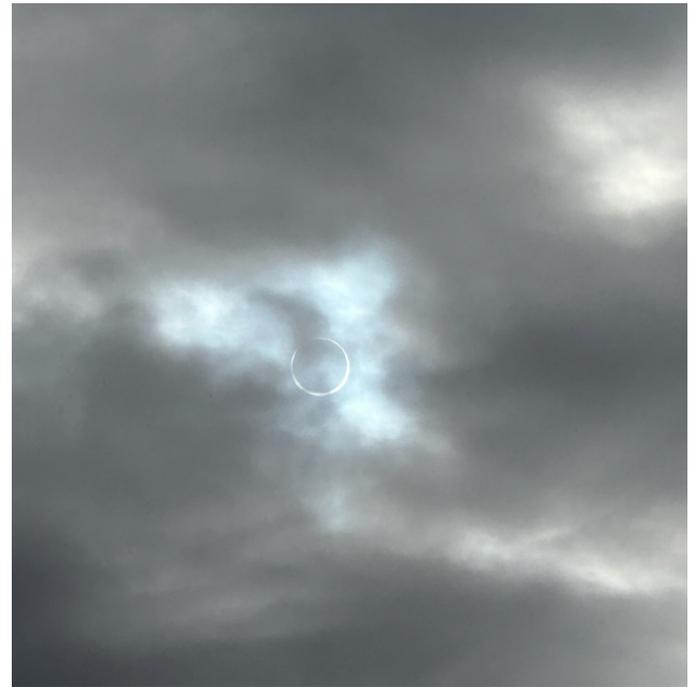
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Eclipse Stories

Tales of a New Eclipse Chaser: The Great Escape to 2023 Annularity

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To make a long story shorter, we left on time but were not met with thin cirrus clouds, but almost complete overcast thick cirrus clouds! We continued our drive toward centerline near Winnemucca, hoping we could line up our target with a hole in the cloud cover. We reached a point just past Winnemucca that gave us just that, and sacrificed a little time between first and second contact to find a decent point and as accessible as we could be on centerline. Success! Even through the veil of clouds, we were able to see annularity. Justin took some shots, while I recorded the remaining contact times. We did a little “post wrap-up” for my podcast, and I walked away with two lessons:



1) Never give up on hope. If it's important enough, a solution will present itself.

2) During any kind of eclipse (or day in life), you don't have to have the perfect day. You just need it to be good enough.



Within 24 hours, I had found a flight, traveled across the country, and seen an annular eclipse that just hours before seemed like a hopeless and impossible task. By the way, on the way back to Reno... yeah, it happened. The sky was perfectly clear and there was no evidence of cloudy conditions. I won't forget the trip and all those who made it possible.

Eclipse Stories

The Solar Eclipse from Prestonburg, Kentucky

by Steve Russo

Here in Prestonsburg, Kentucky, we had the October 14th Solar Eclipse on the Saturday of our Jenny Wiley Festival, which has been running for 43 years.

I played up the Eclipse as being the first time in history that a Solar Eclipse happened during the festival, and it wouldn't happen again for another 215 years!



I purchased 500 pairs of Eclipse glasses to give out to the public, and was going to set up my Astroscan to project the image on a large screen, but on the day of the Eclipse, it was about an 80% cloud cover. So we officially canceled the public observing, but I was able to get a shot or two with my camera during “maximum” eclipse, which by me was only around 42%.

Eclipse Stories

The Buffalo Eclipse Consortium

by Mark Percy and Tim Collins

ORIGINS OF THE B.E.C.

by Mark Percy

It is a long drive from Buffalo, NY to Grand Rapids, MI. The GPS said 7.5 hours, but driving alone made it turn into almost 9 hours to get to that GLPA conference in 2015. It was worth every bit of effort. Late in the conference schedule, Ken Miller led a workshop about how to teach about eclipses. We had the usual lights, spheres and hula hoops. But Ken got on a bit of a soap box as well. He also explained his experience as the Director of the Bishop Planetarium in Oahu, HI for the July 1991 total solar eclipse. “Do everything you can to prepare, and do it much earlier than you think you will need to. Be THE place for people to learn about what will happen.” After all, this is what a planetarium is all about.

I knew we had an eclipse coming to Buffalo before it would be my time to hang up my laser pointer, but it was still 9 years away. Surely, he was only talking about preparing for the 2017 eclipse, right? On the journey back to Buffalo, I had a lot of time to think. I remembered my surprise when the 2003 opposition of Mars occurred. Drove of people came to my planetarium, seeking information or a viewing opportunity when I hadn't planned anything for the public. Indeed, Ken was right. People will be coming to us to learn in 2017, and 2024 would be

much bigger, because we would experience totality for that solar eclipse.

Kevin Williams took the reins of the Ferguson Planetarium in 2010. I was really excited to have another planetarian around. We met a few times, and thought about ways that we could support each other. We found another planetarium in town at Lackawanna High school, and started an informal organization called PAWNY - the Planetarium Association of Western New York. The pair of solar and lunar eclipses of October 2014 was our first big attempt at collaboration. We all hosted planetarium shows and telescopic observations which were well attended thanks to combined promotional efforts. We were stronger and better together.

With that success, Kevin and I discussed forming a larger group to plan for both the 2017 and 2024 solar eclipses. We reached out to the Buffalo Museum of Science, the Buffalo Astronomical Association, the Buffalo & Erie County Library System, and Penn Dixie (which is a really cool fossil hunting park if you are interested). Quarterly meetings rotated through each of our locations which built a stronger understanding of each others' operations, strengths and needs.

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Eclipse Stories

The Buffalo Eclipse Consortium: Origins of the BEC

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Summer of 2017 arrived, as did many hundreds of visitors to our eclipse watching parties in August. Over 9,000 people attended our viewing parties around the area, and over 15,000 sets of eclipse glasses were given out. And this was just a partial eclipse. Wait until 2024! We also started the website buffaloecclipse.org for local information. Lots of web traffic around 2017 helped keep it at the top of the search results in the years to come.

As the months passed, more and more people heard about our Buffalo Eclipse Consortium. Our Explore & More Children's Museum, the AKG Art Gallery, the Challenger Learning Center in Lockport, New York State Parks, the Buffalo Audubon Society, and Visit Buffalo Niagara started joining in on our meetings. The momentum has continued to grow, and we now have over 130 local stakeholders involved. We have a few months left to go, but so far we have followed Ken Miller's advice. The press, schools and government officials are now coming to us with their inquiries for facts, interviews, B-roll footage and expert advice. Thanks, Ken!



CONNECTING ACROSS TIME

by Tim Collins

It began for me with watching news coverage about the total solar eclipse near Hawaii on June 10, 2002. I was heading to the planetarium that evening, and deciding I wanted to know a little bit more, I looked up NASA's website, and saw their eclipse page. On that map were lines representing total solar eclipses from 2001-2010. There was a "next" button on the page which revealed 2011-2020. Something from that news story about 2017 finally clicked with me. Seeing the path of the future 2017 eclipse stretching across the United States just awed me. I realized it was some 15 years off, but I knew I was going to have to be there. Then, one more harmless "next" click. I saw the path I couldn't believe... right over my city. But - when was it? I was shocked to see April 8, 2024 - a lifetime away! Where would I be? What would it be like that year? Where will life take me? I knew one thing for certain, I wanted to see THAT one. I continued to keep it in my mind, and by 2006 and the advent of Google Maps, I was able to find a more interactive map with that path baked on, and followed it across the city, centerline first touching across from one of our nature centers! I always noted it

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Eclipse Stories

The Buffalo Eclipse Consortium: Origins of the BEC

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whenever the subject of eclipses came up in programs, but was met with quizzical looks as if I was talking about a time machine.

By 2015 I had my plans made for a trip to see family in Georgia, and my first total solar eclipse. In mid-2016, I received an email on July 27th from Mark Percy. I was at my day job in the hospital, checking emails on my phone while on a break. I had just put a “coming next year” slide into my pre-show presentation for the upcoming community education season for the Williamsville planetarium, and was planning on mentioning it to the public when the Ferguson Planetarium schedule resumed. We had discussed it a bit at the MAPS conference that year at the Richmond Science Center in Waldorf, but the email contained nothing less than I expected. Mark had sent out a message to a small group of us (his planetarium, Whitworth Ferguson, Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo Astronomical Association, Beaver Meadow Observatory and Penn Dixie Fossil and Nature Preserve) asking for a meeting to begin planning for the partial eclipse of 2017. Kevin Williams hosted the event at Buffalo State in one of the new classrooms on August 22nd. Mark titled it “Eclipse Summit,” but what it turned out to be was far greater: It was the start of the Buffalo Eclipse Consortium. Sure, we spoke about ideas for ordering glasses,

and events we could do leading up to the partial eclipse (for us) in 2017, but we also briefly discussed another date: April 8, 2024.

From that day on, we were getting the entire Western New York region prepared for both of these events. It has been a long journey to date. While it seemed that the destination was originally so far off, signs of its arrival are here; much like driving across the country and seeing that first hint of the Rocky Mountains on the horizon that one may (im)patiently wait for along the way. While we tried to ring the proverbial bell several times at every astronomical event since 2015 (two Mercury transits, three partial solar eclipses and five total lunar eclipses), it didn't seem that our messaging was getting across. Over the last year, my personal mission has been to bring the rarity of the event to the forefront: researching a great deal of both the 1925 and 1806 total solar eclipses, the last two to pass over Western New York.

1806 has been a very challenging task as that particular time in history is when Buffalo was merely a brand-new village on the shores of Lake Erie, established two years earlier in 1804. What complicates matters further is that any

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Eclipse Stories

The Buffalo Eclipse Consortium: Origins of the BEC

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records that I may have hoped to find were most likely destroyed by another major historical event: The War of 1812, as British soldiers burned the Village of Buffalo on their way to Washington, D.C., to do the same to James Madison and the White House. As far as the 1806 solar eclipse, it is also known as the famed “Tecumseh’s Eclipse” after the famous Native American Shawnee Nation leader.

1925, however, was a bit easier with information retrieval. Buffalo was a thriving city in that era, leading the nation in flour production. Having the most successful flour mills due to shipping lanes along the Great Lakes, and the 100-year-old Erie Canal, Buffalo was indeed among the major metropolitan areas of the early 20th century. Even astronomer Dr. Harlow Shapley, then-director of the Harvard Observatory, chose to visit Buffalo as his destination for the solar eclipse, as he had experiments set up along the path for which I am still uncovering the details.

Our next lunar traverse will not be until 2144, more than 120 years from now. In order to help with planning events for the crew of the future, I would like us to leave behind more information to tell this story, since we had virtually nothing to tell us exactly what went on in 1925 save for a few newspaper articles. I am

working on a few projects to mitigate this, one of which is an “Eclipse Time Capsule” which will contain several items from 2024, namely as many samples of the customized glasses we are using in our area, merchandise that we can store, and even some handwritten notes to bring a sense of connectivity between generations. Additionally, it would be nice to include a flash drive containing some of the Zoom recordings and correspondence we have had to show the planning. The main proposal is to begin collection of materials for the time capsule on April 9th, and seal it on October 26, 2024. It is to remain sealed until October 26, 2143, in what should be a media circus! October 26, 2143 will be the one-year mark until the solar eclipse of 2144, and should help them kick off awareness; something we have struggled with, and most of it seemingly “forced” to try to rise above all the national and world politics that dominate our headlines.

For now, our chief issue is timing. April is not a very convenient weather month in Western New York, nor is it that great anywhere along the path of totality from Dallas to Montreal. There seems to be an overwhelming sense of pessimism, and it is preventing many from planning events for this eclipse. Because it is still

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Eclipse Stories

The Buffalo Eclipse Consortium: Origins of the BEC

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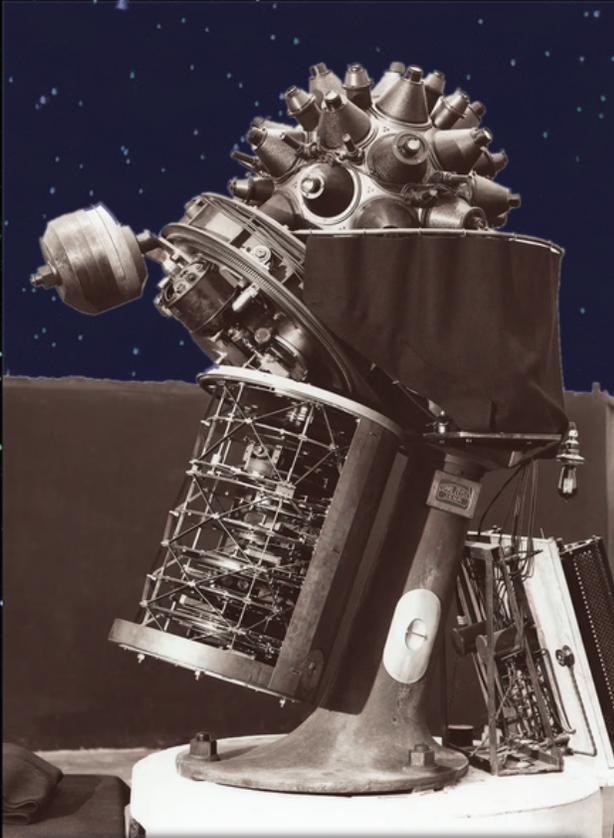
early spring, waterways will most likely still be closed on the lake. If this were a June eclipse like 1806, you would see many events by now along the waterfront on both Lake Erie and Ontario. It's been hard to fight history, but we have had some recently acceptable weather along that first week in April over the last five years. Overall, there is a sense of pessimism in the community about the potential outcome for April 8th.

However, we are seeing a pattern change recently. This event, like 2017, should be a cause for celebration, not a reiteration of doom. We still hear more about our shocking blizzards of 2022 AND of 1977 more than we hear about the upcoming natural wonder of an eclipse. Things are turning around a bit. The more we are out there promoting and discussing the hope of getting an amazing event, the more we are changing that mindset. And the start of that hope is this: We do not need a picture-perfect 70-degree cloudless sky day. Many of the public think that is a prerequisite for viewing a solar eclipse. But that is our challenge as educators: to be able to teach through the misconception that only a clear day will reveal a solar eclipse.

From our area, here is a list of things we have done and are working on (outside of the government agencies and tourism outlets); hopefully, it can still help another area. If you have not gone to eclipseweb.org to set up a stakeholder group, you should!

- Buffalo Bisons
- Buffalo Sabres
- Buffalo Bills
- Buffalo Convention Center
- Eclipse Time Capsule
- Plaques and markers along the path locally
- Customized Eclipse Glasses
- Commemorative Merchandise
- Working with underserved groups
- Focusing media attention
- Assist with Event Planning
- Eclipse Training (safety and science) for the general public
- Setting up knowledge stations at local shopping malls
- Holding talks and lectures at local libraries, schools, and senior centers
- Designating space in state, city, and local parks
- Speaking with local restaurants, breweries, and vintners
- Talking to bakeries, chocolatiers, and other confectioners





With great pleasure and respect, GOTO, Inc. would like to honor the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first optical star projector and the creation of the public planetarium.

The innovation that began with the invention of the Zeiss Planetarium in Jena 100 years ago has transformed into a culture of education that transcends borders and continues to evolve to this day. Even though planetariums use different brands of equipment, we believe that the excitement and satisfaction that visitors receive from the wonderful experience they gain inside the dome is a universal value.

GOTO, Inc., along with the entire worldwide planetarium community, takes great pride and joy in fulfilling our role in providing this value, and looks forward to continuing this mission with creative innovations for the future of the planetarium.



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Meet the Candidates: JIM BADER

Get to know one of the five candidates running for a MAPS Board of Director position

I am honored to have been nominated to the Board of Directors of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society!

While I know many of the MAPS members and have worked with you over the years, I am excited to now officially be a part of the region. For many of you who have not had the opportunity to get to know me, my name is Jim Bader and I am originally from North Texas and the SWAP region. As of October 31, 2023 I am now the director of the Strassenburgh Planetarium in Rochester, NY. While I may be new to the region I am thrilled to be a part of MAPS, and to have the opportunity to serve as one of your MAPS Directors. I am a staunch proponent of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and would bring a continuation of these outlooks to the role. Having an inclusive and supportive professional organization like MAPS is key to keep the planetarium community thriving and growing.

I have spent the last decade working in a handful of different domes, and the last 7 years running university planetariums at the University of North Texas and the University of Texas at Arlington. These experiences, as well as those from my current dome, have given me a well-rounded perspective from



working with diverse groups of people and have cultivated my passion for inclusive organizations.

Lastly, I would be extremely grateful to be given the opportunity to serve as MAPS Director, and I would continue the wonderful work that so many of our colleagues have pursued in the past. The value of organizations like MAPS lies in the supportive and inclusive nature that encourages cooperation and advocates for the members' professional and personal growth. These are the values I would bring to any committees I had the chance to serve on. Thank you for the opportunity to be a candidate for the position.

Meet the Candidates: JAMES BAUMAN

Get to know one of the five candidates running for a MAPS Board of Director position

Hello! My name is James Bauman, the Planetarium Director for the North Penn Planetarium at the North Penn High School in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and I am honored to be nominated for the position of MAPS Director.

I have been a high school and middle school Physics teacher for almost 27 years, but it wasn't until 2011 that I fell in love with the planetarium. The planetarium director at the time left, and the position opened up to the district. I took a chance, and never looked back. I was so new to the planetarium at the time that it took me almost an entire day to realize that one of the control panels on the Spitz 1024 console was completely missing! Once I figured things out, I instantly fell in love with the planetarium position, and spent the next twelve years learning what it meant to be a planetarian.

My first MAPS conference was in the summer of 2012, and it was there that I was introduced to the planetarium world. The people I met back in 2012 helped me get started on my journey in the planetarium. While I wasn't able to attend another MAPS conference during those first few years, I was able to stay in touch with many great individuals who were able to give me guidance and advice.



Then in 2022 our planetarium went through a renovation, and installed a SSIA Dark Matter system. Once again my world was turned upside down with the new system, but once again I was able to turn to the wonderful individuals in MAPS for guidance and advice.

It is because of the help that I have received over the years that has led me to desire to hold a leadership role in the MAPS organization. My journey would have been much different without the great people in the MAPS community, and I hope that by being a Director of the organization I can begin to help others as I was helped in the past.

Meet the Candidates: STEPHEN DUBOIS

Get to know one of the five candidates running for a MAPS Board of Director position

Greetings, esteemed colleagues and MAPS Members. As most of you know, I had served in the past as your Secretary on the Executive Board for three terms, and hope to earn your vote to return with the organization in the capacity of Board Member for the upcoming term. I bring with me more than 30 years of experience as a planetarian, both at the Whitworth Ferguson Planetarium in Buffalo, NY, as well as the Williamsville Space Lab Planetarium in Williamsville, NY. Throughout my years I have used both opto-mechanical and digital equipment as well as many outreach opportunities teaching under the authentic sky at local summer camps for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. An advocate of both new technology and traditional educational values, I believe that, first and foremost, a planetarium should replicate the experience of viewing the night sky under perfect conditions. In other words, the stars should always be the central focus of any planetarium, and that enriching the lives of the visitors, through deepened understanding of the skies above, is of key importance.

My background is somewhat unique. I have been around my hometown Planetarium for my entire life. When the Buffalo State College Planetarium opened in 1964, my father Robert, a physics professor, was asked to be co-administrator of the new facility. Two years later, the late Dr. James Orgren replaced my father and accepted the newly created position of full-time Director. During the many times when I would travel with my



father to campus, a visit under the dome with "Dr. O" was always a highlight. As a young teenager, I began to learn the night sky and, after the summer of 1983, I set my goals on seriously studying astronomy. It was inevitable that I would again cross paths with the rebuilt and renamed Whitworth Ferguson Planetarium when I began my first semester of college at Buffalo State in 1986. I joined the Astronomy Club, and held many key positions throughout my college years, including Vice President and President. In 1987, I was formally trained as an operator/educator, and I have been working at the planetarium off and on ever since. Being in a small university dome, I've had to wear many hats over the years. I have created curriculum, authored and directed several multi-media presentations, while also working as production designer and illustrator. My greatest passion associated with this field, though, is music/soundtrack

Meet the Candidates: STEPHEN DUBOIS

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scoring, and I have served as music director on most every show with which I have been involved. I have also composed original music for 8 planetarium and/or fulldome productions (both locally and abroad), two independent films, and always welcome the challenges associated with bringing diverse space science topics to life sonically. In the mid 1990's, Paul Krupinski created a planetarium show production company called Ancient Eyes Productions, and I worked with Paul on a major release that was distributed all over North America which I co-wrote, co-illustrated and scored, called "Mister Frost and the Skies of Winter." Paul and I continued working with creating and introducing a line of educational items for gift shops (such as astronomer pencils & erasers and our best-selling "Moonphaser" pencils). All of these diverse experiences have made me an extremely well-rounded candidate, because I have worked within many facets of this field.

For the last 11 years, I have co-chaired the MAPS subcommittee for our grant program with Kristin Chon and Sue Button. We evaluate the grant submissions, and decide upon the level of funding to offer.

To me, being on the Executive Board is an opportunity to be a part of something where I can make a difference. Believe me, if any of you have ever spoken to me during the conferences and voiced praise, concerns, constructive criticism, or provided ideas to improve the organization, that I have always communicated such feedback to the Board. Most importantly, is that I see MAPS as a community. I have enjoyed learning from you in your talks and presentations, conversing with you at banquets, meeting with our ever-supportive vendors, and also sharing with all of you over these past years (while both on and off the Executive board) my presentations such as "Are We Obsolete?," "Props in the Dark," "How Correct are You?," and "Scoring for Science." I hope that you will elect me so that I may resume my involvement with MAPS, an organization which I care about so deeply. I, as well as all of the Board, believe in working as a team to make MAPS the very best it can be. I feel that I have a lot more to give to this team, and hope you will feel the same way. I will represent the mission statement of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society and you, the membership, well. Thank you in advance for your continued support!

Meet the Candidates: PAUL KRUPINSKI

Get to know one of the five candidates running for a MAPS Board of Director position

Greetings, fellow friends and colleagues of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society! I am appreciative, once again, for a nomination to the Board of Directors of the MAPS Executive Committee for the upcoming election in January 2024. As an incumbent, I've had the opportunity to work with the Executive Committee since 2010, and it has been my pleasure and a true blessing. Our Board is always striving to serve and benefit YOU, our valued membership.

For those who are new to the MAPS community, I'm Paul Joseph Krupinski from Cheektowaga, New York --- a suburb of the Nickel City and City of Good Neighbors, Buffalo. Fun fact: The Buffalo nickel, otherwise known as the Indian Head nickel, was a copper-nickel five-cent coin by the United States Mint from 1913-1938, with an image of a bison on the reverse side of which the city is named!

In the planetarium world, I am the proud owner of Mr. K.'s Mobile Dome Planetarium (for over 30 years), presenter at the world renowned Strasenburgh Planetarium of the Rochester Museum & Science Center (for 28 years) and planetarium teacher at the Maryvale UFSD Planetarium in my hometown in Cheektowaga, NY, since 2015. I'm also the co-founder of the Challenger Learning Center of Lockport.

I attended my first planetarium conference in Wheeling, WV, in 1990 and have been a



member of MAPS for 33 years. I've been fortunate to meet so many amazing people in the field, spend precious time at conferences with life-long friends, share some terrific ideas, as well as collaborate with the finest Planetarians this business has to offer.

I've served MAPS as your President Elect, President, and Past President from 2000-2006, which was truly an outstanding and rewarding experience for me. I've worked with a small group of MAPS members in a Focus Group, as recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), to analyze areas of the Society that the Executive Committee can improve as a whole. I've been a member of the aforementioned SPC for years, and I've collaborated on the MAPS Executive Committee Calendar and Procedures, Conference Guidelines and Vendor Policy, as well as the MAPS Executive Handbook, which

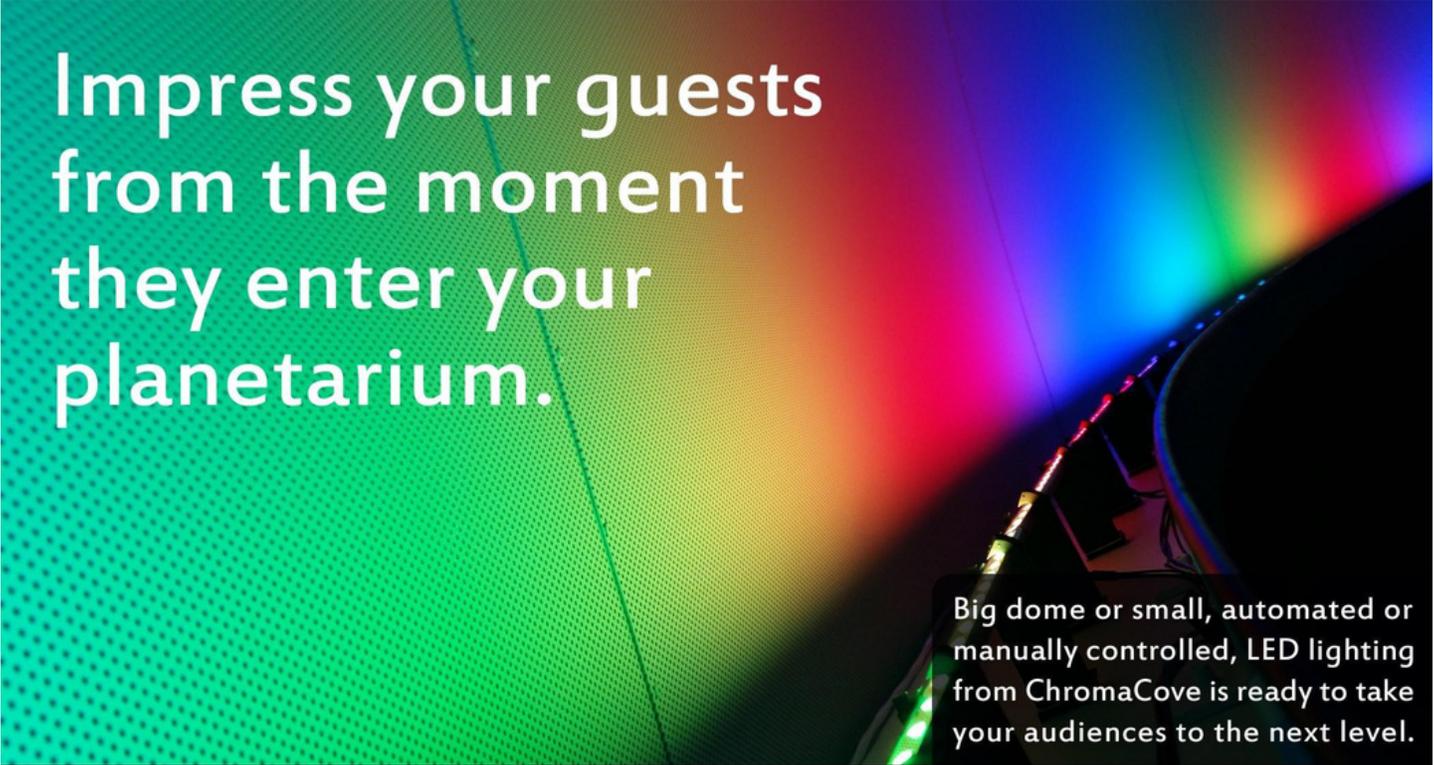
Meet the Candidates: PAUL KRUPINSKI

(continued from previous page)

includes its recent 2023 update. In addition, I'm currently the Chairperson of the Audit and Memorial Committees, as well as a member of the Website Committee.

Finally, as many of you know, time doesn't always allow the Executive Committee to complete the task or tasks at hand, which ultimately improves our organization. Many ideas to improve value and benefits to

membership are indeed work-in-progress and need time to be brought to fruition! Therefore, I'd like the opportunity, once again, to continue with the Executive Committee to complete unfinished business, while cultivating new innovative ideas, which ultimately provides our Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society an even brighter future going forward. Thank you for the opportunity!



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Meet the Candidates: PATTY SEATON

Get to know one of the five candidates running for a MAPS Board of Director position

Hello, MAPS colleagues!

Okay, so maybe I could have chosen a better picture of me for this election bid. Perhaps a professional head shot? Yet this photo represents why I want to continue on as a MAPS Board Member... after over ten years of dreaming and advocating for it, my theater is finally being renovated with an AMAZING hybrid system that pairs this gorgeous GOTO Orpheus starball with Digistar 7. I will now have capabilities that far exceed my abilities, with a WONDERFUL opportunity to learn. So, what does this mean for YOU? It means that I finally get to work in BOTH worlds of optical and digital. As my personal experience in these worlds expands, so does my ability to better serve you, to better realize the direction that planetariums are taking, after 100 years, to expand my planetarium's partnerships, and to share all of this with all of you.

Our field is evolving, yet the fundamental joy of bringing the majesty of the stars to audiences everywhere remains. I bring you 30 years of planetarium teaching in a 55' dome with 160+ seats, serving the students of my district, as well as the public. I bring you several years experience working part time in the National Air and Space Museum's Einstein Planetarium, using both their Zeiss and Digital Sky. And now, I am assisting one of my district's elementary schools with their



recently purchased Digitalis portable planetarium. I bring you institutional knowledge, while jumping headfirst into the most modern planetarium technologies.

Let's work together to shape the organization to best suit the needs of this evolving field, with the diversity of people, planetarium systems, and missions. Let's figure out how to strengthen our partnerships with each other, sharing ideas and resources beyond the conferences. I have served on the Strategic Planning Committee, helping to explore these ideas, working closely with the Executive Board to implement them. I would be honored to continue on in the capacity of Executive Board Member. Planetarium Patty, at your service!!

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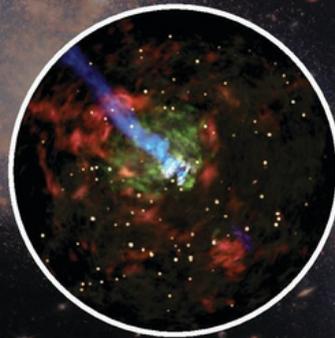
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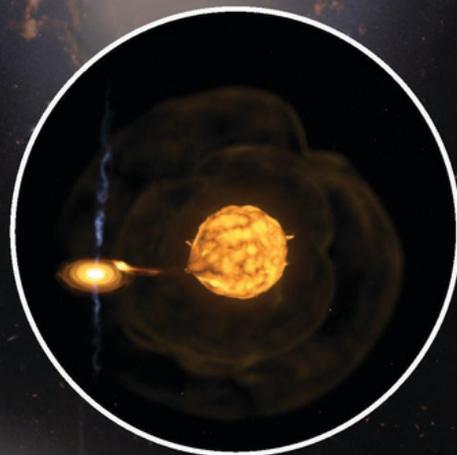
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QUASARS



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GALILEAN MOONS



Stories from the MAPS Region

New Jersey Planetarians... Assemble!

by Amie Gallagher

Staff from multiple planetariums in New Jersey got together for dinner and dialogue on Thursday, November 30 at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton:

- Our hosts, Jacob and Bill, showed off their 8K SSIA system with the show, “Aurōrae.”
- Amie gave a MAPS update.
- Cara filled us in on the MAPS Membership Committee's challenge to find all the "hidden" planetariums. In New Jersey, she has come across almost a dozen that we weren't aware of previously.
- Haim shared what NJ SpaceGrant is, and how it might help our state planetarium community.
- Carlos started a conversation that we saw needs more time: staff training, surveys, activities, lectures, and more.
- Jacob also gave us a brief description of his PhD research on exoplanets.

We are making plans for more after-work gatherings, zoom meetings, and all-day workshops to share more tips and tricks.



Back row:

**Haim Baruh (NJ Space Grant Consortium),
Kevin Molnar (Novins Planetarium),
Kevin Schindler (RVCC Planetarium),
Jacob Hamer (NJ State Museum),
Carlos Miranda (Planetarium at P-Tech).**

Front row:

**Connor Marti (Edelman Planetarium),
Amie Gallagher (RVCC Planetarium),
Cara Muscio (Novins Planetarium),
Mary Hiller (Newark Museum),
Bill Murray (NJ State Museum).**



Stories from the MAPS Region

Unique Identity for a School Dome Space

by JT Towne

We've seen school planetariums expand their curriculum to include more STEAM, upgrade their projection technology, close down, or even be converted to storage rooms; but here's a new one: at the Valley Junior/Senior High School in New Kensington, PA, just outside Pittsburgh, the circa-1964 30-foot planetarium has recently been turned into Brainspace – an A.I.-focused exploration space equipped with versatile seating, black-light writing boards covering much of the wall area, Oculus headsets, a 360-degree smart owl camera for meetings, and Apple TV / response system driven by student tablets.

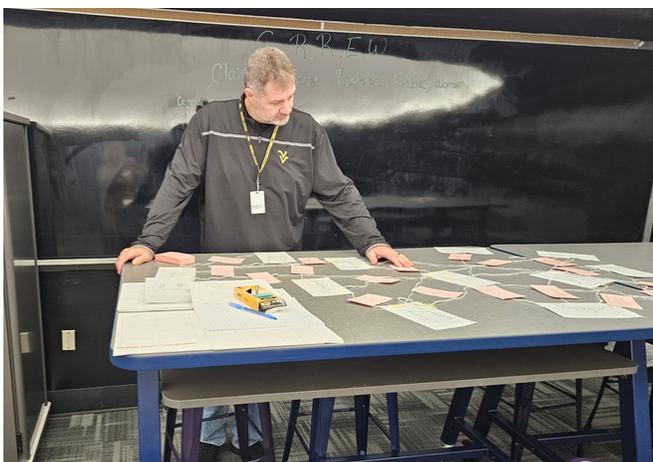
Superintendent Chris Sefcheck beams as he shows off the specialty flex furniture now in place, which includes a mix of high tables, collaborative pods, and a row of cushion platform risers – the favorite of his students. “The space will be used primarily by students, but also for meetings of district staff. 70 can sit comfortably in here now. Those in the VR world, the music world, or the hands-on world of learning can all benefit here.”



The space will be managed by two technology coaches, and used by multiple departments. So far, they've been using the dome for inset projection, but the district hopes to add full-dome projection if they can find a system offering desirable, non-astronomy activities or content matching their goals for Brainspace, with which students can interact and develop as their own collaborative AV experiments and projects.

Dr. Sefcheck stated: "We are truly excited to have the necessary resources to teach critical thinking and problem-solving skills to all learners. We feel this transcends human intellect beyond state standards and core content into a realm of higher learning."

He also hopes his district will take a lead on AI-generated lesson plans in all subject areas, saving significant time while enhancing pedagogy and assessment.

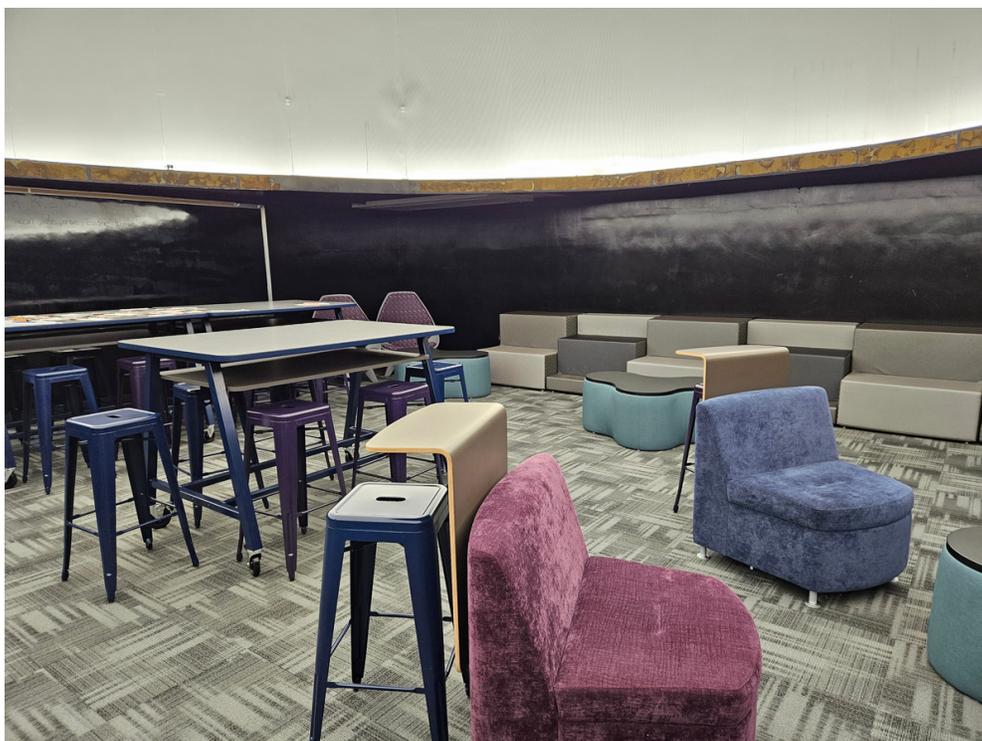


Stories from the MAPS Region

Unique Identity for a School Dome Space

(continued from previous page)

*Chris Sefcheck,
Superintendent of the
New Kensington-Arnold
School District, on the
new platform risers.*



The new “flex furniture” in the space includes chairs, stools, high tables, collaborative pods, and platform risers.

Stories from the MAPS Region

The Dancing Stars: An Iroquoian Legend

adapted by Amy Friedman
shared here by April Whitt

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: This is the third in a multi-part series of stories shared by April Whitt. April continues to bring us stories that she has collected over the years!

Long ago, when the Earth and sky were new, seven sisters lived in a village. The sisters loved to dance. Every day they danced together in the forest, and wherever one sister went, the others followed. Every evening the sisters returned to the longhouse to rest, but by morning they were ready to dance.

One evening, as the Sun began to set, the sisters heard in the distance a glorious song. The song seemed to be calling to them, and they forgot about their suppers and they forgot about their home. For a moment they stood still and listened, and then, without speaking a word, they danced off toward the source of the song.

They danced through the woods and into the forest. On they danced, as the Sun dipped toward the horizon. The stars began to gleam and the sky grew darker, but still the sisters danced toward the sound. Then, suddenly, their feet seemed lighter, and when they looked down, they saw that everything they had ever known was far below them, and they knew they were dancing up into the sky.

They danced on, higher and higher, moving toward the beautiful sound, and the song grew louder and louder and more and more beautiful and more and more

mysterious. Below them, the longhouses and the trees and their friends and families seemed to grow smaller and smaller. And then the song became a sweet, gentle voice.

“I came to the sky...
For a hunter pursued me,
And now I am lost in the sky.”

On the sisters danced, higher and higher.

“Come, my sisters,
Come here to me in the sky,
And I will watch over you.”

Then the sisters saw who was singing the song. It was a great black bear. Her tail glistened, for it was strewn with stars, and around her neck she wore a shimmering necklace of stars. Her nose and her toes twinkled with stars, and around her belly hung a belt of shining stars.

The sisters danced closer and closer and the bear went on singing. On and on she sang, and the sisters went on dancing. They danced for hours and the great black bear sang, and her toes and nose and tail and neck and belly glistened.

Stories from the MAPS Region

The Dancing Stars: An Iroquoian Legend

continued from previous page

After many hours, the sisters looked up and saw how very dark the sky was, and how far away they had traveled, and they could not remember the way home.

The Moon sailed and winked and watched as the sisters went on dancing. "My children," she said, "this is your home now. The stars and I love the way you dance, and we wish you to live here with us."

The sisters leaped and twirled and whirled and swayed and twisted and tapped and toed. To their amazement, they did not grow tired. They twirled faster, they whirled faster, and each time they twirled, another star twinkled and grew, and the great black bear's song grew sweeter still.

Then suddenly, the smallest sister heard a voice. She heard it over the sound of the song, and over the tapping of her sisters' feet. And she knew it was her mother's voice. Her mother was calling to her.

The smallest sister began to run toward her mother's voice. "Come back, sister," cried the six dancing sisters, but the little girl was racing now. "Come back, sister," called the dancing sisters once again, and they watched as their youngest sister ran with a bright star trailing her.

Together, the youngest sister and the star descended from the sky. Down, down, down they sped, past clouds and past the eagle's nest, and past the tallest branches

of the trees. On they raced down, down, down.

At last the smallest sister saw her mother, and she raced faster still. Finally, she landed on the ground. But when she landed, she vanished, and there was, in her place, simply a hole. Her mother looked down at the hole, and she began to weep. And then she looked into the sky and saw her other daughters dancing still.

"Stay in the sky," she called to warn them. "Stay there and dance with the great black bear or you will crash to Earth."

The sisters heard their mother's pleading voice over the sound of the great black bear's song, and they nodded their heads and waved and smiled, and the stars behind them twinkled more brightly. "Yes, Mother," they called, "we will stay in the sky."

Down below the mother sat and wept, and soon she saw a small green shoot spring up from the hole. Quickly it grew higher and higher. This was the youngest sister, reaching up for her sisters. Higher it grew, until it reached the six sisters, and they cried, "Welcome back, sister."

Today the tall tree still stands, the tallest tree in the whole world. And when you look up at the sky, you will see the dancing sisters, and you will hear the song of the great black bear who sings a lullaby for all her children.

Stories from the MAPS Region

The Dancing Stars: An Iroquoian Legend

continued from previous page

The Iroquois Year

The Iroquois New Year is celebrated when the constellation (sic) Pleiades reaches the highest point in the night sky, five nights after the New Moon in January. Pleiades, a group of seven stars, is sometimes called Seven Sisters, and is part of a larger constellation called Taurus, or the Bull. If you look south on a clear winter night, you may find the Pleiades.

The Iroquoian New Year festival is celebrated for eight days. This is the midwinter festival, a time to pray that life will be renewed and continue.

This story is one version of a traditional Iroquoian story of the origins of the universe. In some versions of this tale there are seven sisters, in others, seven brothers. Whatever the version, the seven dancers represent the seven stars of Pleiades.



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Stories from the MAPS Region

Hallmark Comes to Connecticut

by Brian Koehler

Do you like Planetariums?
Do you like Hallmark Christmas Movies?

Do you like Planetariums IN Hallmark Christmas Movies?

For their 2023 holiday production, “Mystic Christmas,” the folks from Hallmark had a choice. They could plaster new signs all over storefronts to create a fictional town name like Christmasville, or they could go the authentic route. They opted to keep the original names of businesses and landmarks around Mystic, CT, to tell the story of an animal expert who answers a call for help from an old friend, which puts her in the path of an ex-boyfriend.



The Mystic Aquarium, our neighbor and occasional tourist rival, features prominently in “Mystic Christmas.” But for a pivotal scene late in the movie, the male protagonist wants to re-create the Northern Lights for his love interest. And where better to do that than in the local Planetarium!

In typical “movie magic,” Hallmark’s video wasn’t exactly “fulldome” material, but they cropped the shots and edited just enough to make it seem like the aurora was filling the dome overhead!



For what it’s worth... this is actually the second time that Mystic’s Treworgy Planetarium has been featured in a movie, with the first appearance coming in the 1988 cult-classic, “Mystic Pizza.”



Stories from the MAPS Region

CJR School #9 Enlightened by Spectacular Cosmic Experience as P-TECH Planetarium Unveils the Mysteries of Eclipses and Moon Phases!

by Dr. Carlos Miranda

In an unforgettable educational event, over 150 enthusiastic students at CJR School #9, in Paterson, New Jersey, were transported to the cosmos as P-Tech's portable planetarium program descended upon their school. The engaging session focused on the celestial marvels of eclipses and Moon phases, and left young minds spellbound from start to finish. The day featured captivating hands-on activities that brought these cosmic phenomena to life, as students crafted scaled models of the Earth and Moon.



Additionally, a mesmerizing planetarium presentation took them on a visual journey, unraveling the secrets of eclipses and Moon phases, and the sky's dynamic dance. The adventure didn't end there – solar viewing with safety glasses generously provided by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific allowed students to witness the sun in all its radiant glory. This awe-inspiring educational event has sparked a renewed interest in astronomy, fostering a new generation of young stargazers at CJR School #9.

Stories from the MAPS Region

CJR School #9 Enlightened by Spectacular Cosmic Experience as P-TECH Planetarium Unveils the Mysteries of Eclipses and Moon Phases!

(continued from previous page)



Stories from the MAPS Region

Earth Science for Martians

by Siroth Hajed

translated by Thomas Wm. Hamilton

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: This is the third in a four-part series of science fiction stories written by Tom Hamilton. Please enjoy this satirical look at how Earth and its Moon might be viewed from a different vantage point in our solar system.

Ever since Hnz Lpay invented the telescope over 200 years ago we have learned much about our neighboring planet of Earth. Unfortunately, this knowledge is regularly abused by trolls and fools, and now apparently by hoaxsters. Earth has no life, and cannot possibly support life, as I shall explain, so those "mysterious" roving vehicles (including one that even makes short hops) are clearly made right here on Mars as a joke.

Why is life on Earth impossible? First, the poisonous molecule dihydrogen oxide (H₂O) is extremely common, covering 70% of the surface, and so common in the atmosphere that large parts of the planet are usually hidden by its clouds, unlike the life-renewing dust clouds of Mars.

Second, the gravity on Earth is nearly triple ours. Anything trying to live under such force would be incredibly muscle-bound, or in simple self-protection would be permanently stuck to one position and location. That is hardly conducive to life!

Third, the atmosphere is incredibly dense, over 100 times ours. This would crush any living life form, and if that is not bad

enough, the atmosphere lacks breathable CO₂, and is 20% of the incredibly reactive oxygen molecule. In fact, there is so much oxygen that spontaneous fires (a rarely explored lab phenomenon causing total destruction) are possible.

Fourth, the planet has a powerful magnetic field, the second strongest in the entire Solar System. Experiments have shown this could have dangerous effects on life forms, and attracts some forms of the Sun's emissions which can be lethal.

Fifth, Earth's remarkably large Moon (half the size of our beloved Mars) creates large tides in the planet's atmosphere and bodies of dihydrogen oxide. This has consequences for the planet's weather, as well as regularly drowning portions of the land area in that poisonous liquid.

I am sure that someday our spacecraft will not be limited just to visiting our moons, and travel to Earth's Moon. Perhaps a robot landing or two on Earth, but I cannot imagine why any of our space travelers would risk their lives landing in such a lethal place. And people should stop being childish by creating hoax "Earth robots studying Mars."

Stories from the MAPS Region

Sirius on the Meridian

by Sam Storch

Dear folks,

It's "that time" of the year again, and I'm compelled by tradition to send you and yours these personal and astronomical greetings. I hope you can relax for a moment to enjoy my story, even if it's a bit long, and even if you've read it before. In fact, some of us in our club have read it many times, and might even remember my kids when they were little. It makes our club a very personal thing.

Many years ago when my kids were very little, I used to enjoy a New Year's Eve ritual with them in which I'd take them outside into the back yard just at the moment the new year began.

The best of those nights back up on Long Island found me reveling in a crisp, clear December 31, exulting in the beautiful snow, or at least some nice frost on all the tree branches, the crunch of fall's golden and red and brown leaves still underfoot, and enjoying every breath of cool, clean, dry air at a temperature of perhaps 20°F. This is, of course, very different from what I experience now in South Florida, where the air is very humid, and it reaches 80°F or more even in late December.

I had promised my kids that I would wake them up to see something very special that happened only on New Year's Eve. Keeping my promise, I awakened the kids from their beds; it was past 11:45 PM on

New Year's Eve, and the skies were crystal clear. The little guys were snuggled up stiff and nearly immobilized in their snowsuits, like the kid in that old Christmas movie...

Out in the back yard, I had long ago hammered metal stakes into the grass so that I could set down my 1972-vintage RV-6 telescope and have an almost instant polar alignment for its equatorial mount. The stakes had been driven in so that one of the three pier legs faced exactly north, and I enjoyed calm, stable visual observing. That precise alignment depended on two very long nails of the sort driven through rain gutters into the roof. These had been driven a while back into the flat part of our roof on a clear night, thus forming a meridian line visible from the back yard in the place where Polaris could be seen. Polar alignment had become very easy for all of my visual observing - the two nails plus the finder on the telescope confirmed a straight line that pointed to Polaris. Anyway...

Growing up in my house as a little kid you quickly learned to look for things on the sky- the Moon, Orion's belt, and so on. In fact, trying to please me, the kids would spot any three stars, in any season, and exclaim "Look, Daddy! 'Ryan's belt!" This could happen in summer or winter, but I was always happy because they were looking at the sky - a kind of personal

Stories from the MAPS Region

Sirius on the Meridian

(continued from previous page)

victory for me, even if it was summer and Orion wasn't actually visible. I avoided the wisecracks about Orion not being an Irishman...

Imagine the excitement the kids felt - it's New Year's Eve, the smells of all the candy and special treats set out "for the big people," as well as the rich aroma of good strong coffee fills the house, and they have been taken out of their beds and into the back yard at night, all to see something very, very special, something that happened only one time each year!

Now, besides knowing "Ryan's belt," my kids also knew each winter how to use Orion's belt (or, 'Ryan's belt) to find the Dog Star, Sirius. Even before they could pronounce "Sirius," they knew how to find that Dog Star.

While not as crammed together as the houses where I live now in Florida, if you peered through the rows of hedges or shrubs it was still possible to see the adjacent houses next to or behind my own, and as such, sound could sometimes carry from house to house. Let's be quiet and listen!

I told the kids to watch and listen- just at the moment the Dog Star would be right over the big nails on the roof, they would hear cheering and laughter from all the other houses around us! How their mouths opened wide when it happened! How their

eyes gleamed as they went to bed, knowing that they had witnessed something very special indeed!

I'm sure many of us absolutely ache for the chance to have those sorts of moments once again!

Of course, we who delight in the sky know that at midnight on December 31 into January 1, the night sky's brightest star, Sirius, is near its highest - on the meridian, due south, at midnight. The sky gives you its brightest star at the highest it can be - it is a "sign" for you to have a bright, happy, and healthy year! After the events of the past few years, such a "sign" of hope coming from the sky is certainly welcome.

I have told and retold this story for several decades now, not only with my kids, but also with many groups of people around this time of the year under the velvet-black starry skies in a planetarium, and sometimes under the actual sky on a glorious late December night.

I have gotten older and grayer, and came to realize that along with retirement to Florida a few years ago came a slight westward change in my home's longitude (almost 7°, actually), and with the Earth's precession inexorably moving along (1° for every 72 years!), things are slightly different now, and slightly different here. Slightly.

Stories from the MAPS Region

Sirius on the Meridian

(continued from previous page)

From Long Island, though, things are much as they were all along. Before composing this year's version of this greeting I checked the astronomical data using my fancy software - just to be satisfied that "all was well in the heavens." It turns out that for Long Island, Sirius actually crosses the meridian on the night of December 31 into January 1 at 11:58:15 PM, just before the celebration begins.

The sky always gives you its brightest star as a sign of what's to come in 2024. If it is

clear on New Year's Eve, go outside to look for yourself. If you can, share your passion for the skies with another person!

I wish you and yours health, happiness, dark skies, and a bright, star-filled 2024!

If everything goes well for me in the coming year, then you could get this message again after another trip around the Sun! Better yet, consider spreading your own version of this astronomical truth.

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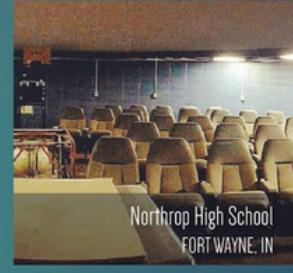
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Stories from the MAPS Region

Amie Gallagher receives Thomas Fangman Award

Press Release

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: This past October, our own Amie Gallagher was honored with the New Jersey Science Convention's Thomas Fangman Award. Below is a press release from this celebration, along with photos submitted by Amie herself.

Amie Gallagher, Director of the Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium, has been honored with the Thomas Fangman Award from the New Jersey Science Convention (NJSC). Gallagher received the award at the Convention's recent banquet, held October 17 at the Princeton Marriott at Forrestal.

Established in 2002 by members of the Science Convention Steering Committee, the award is given to someone who has contributed exemplary service to the Convention over a long period of time. The award was named for Thomas Fangman, a former and much-admired member of the NJSC Steering Committee.

Gallagher, a resident of Somerset, NJ, has attended the NJSC for 20 years and is actively involved with the Convention.

A member of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society (MAPS) and the International Planetarium Society for more than 30 years, Gallagher serves as Secretary of MAPS, is a member of the MAPS Education Committee, and has been honored as a MAPS Fellow for service to the organization. She also authored two volumes of a children's encyclopedia on space; has acted as an editorial consultant for various publications for children and adults about space and the solar system; and has co-created educational guides for teachers.



Stories from the MAPS Region

Amie Gallagher receives Thomas Fangman Award

(continued from previous page)

Gallagher also served as a keynote speaker and as a panelist at StarFest, an astronomy event held November 3-5 at Bays Mountain Nature Center in Kingsport, TN. This year's theme was "Sky Tales: Telling the stories of the sky through the world's cultures." Gallagher engaged participants in discussion and activities that focused on exploring various codes that may have been used by enslaved people traveling the Underground Railroad. Some of those included secret messages spread through quilt squares, and learning to follow the Big Dipper and the North Star. Gallagher used the RVCC Planetarium's star show for children, "Follow the Drinking Gourd," as a springboard for the activities. The show, which is based on Jeanette Winters' same-titled book, focuses on the astronomy used during the time of the Underground Railroad.



*The Middle Atlantic
Planetarium Society
congratulates Amie
Gallagher for this well-
deserved achievement!*



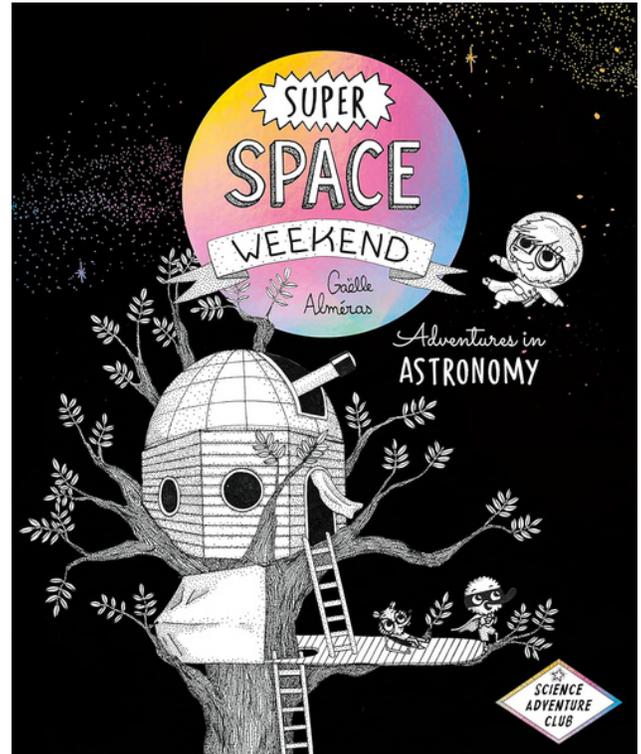
Stories from the MAPS Region

Super Space Weekend

Book Review by Francine Jackson

It always amazes me why kids' books on astronomy have to feature imaginary characters, at least some of which have no idea of the subject, and are along for the ride. In this case, Orni doesn't want to be with his friends, as they want to learn about the sky, and he can't wait to go home.

There is a lot of information presented, and the black-and-white format, with splashes of color do add to the enjoyment of the reading, but there are several blatant errors that the author's noted proofreaders should have noticed immediately (ex., "rotates" for "revolution," misidentification of Andromeda, leaving Pegasus unnamed, naming "Serpens" as the 13th zodiac sign, et al.). The only possible rationale for these blunders could be that this book was translated by a person unaware of the subject.



This book does have potential, if an adult wishes to compare stargazing with pirates and having a barbecue, but it is hoped the person reading this to a young child has enough awareness of the subject to stop and correct any of the major science flaws.

It would be nice for children to possibly equate themselves with the characters Castor, Squeak (but hopefully not Orni) as they peruse the sky, but it also would have been nice for the author and/or translator to have proofread this book one more time.

Super Space Weekend

written by Gaille Almeras

ISBN: 978-1778401091

2023, Greystone Kids

Ages 7-12
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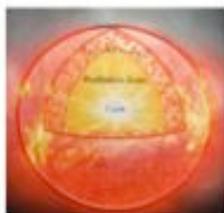
The Full Sun



Erupting Prominence



Full Sun with Sunspots



Interior Layers of Sun



Prominence and Earth



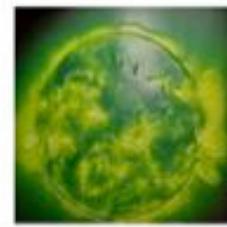
Motion of Sunspots



Earth - Sun Comparison



Magnetic Fields on Sun



Ultraviolet Sun

For more information, visit:
www.youcandoastronomy.com



Committee Update: MEMBERSHIP

Committee Chair: Mike Francis

The election for changes in our By Laws is over, and all motions were approved. We had a somewhat discouraging response of just 48%. Since you're reading the Constellation right now, you're one of about 53% of members who actually open our emails. We do have dome-L and groups.io to get our messages out, but how many of our members check those out on a regular basis is a good question. The most recent post on our Facebook page was made on May 19. To quote Strother Martin - "What we have here is failure to communicate."

The Executive Committee and the Membership Committee have been looking at the problem. We've been making attempts at outreach, especially to lapsed members as well as some new domes (yes there are some new domes in our region), but we need your help.

The first thing you can do is fill out our [revised MAPS membership information form](#).

It will make sure we have your most current info. It will also help us find out how you can get more involved with the society. With the new user groups, we'll be able to put members with similar interests together:

- Mobile domes
- Museum & Nature Center Planetariums
- K-12 School Planetariums
- College and University Planetariums
- Unaffiliated Planetarium Educators
- Planetarium / Astronomy Consultants
- Mentors / Retirees (we haven't figured out a description for this group yet)

The next thing you can do is renew your membership for 2024. Our membership runs from January 1 to December 31.

Renewing before the New Year will make sure you get information on a timely basis, like the Virtual Meeting coming up in January. Also be sure to add the MAPS membership email address (membership@mapsplanetarium.org) to your address book, so our emails don't end up in your junk mail folder.

One more thing you can do is send along any ideas you have for ways to make the society more helpful for you.

Committee Update: WEBSITE

Committee Chair: Tim Collins

Greetings from the Web Committee!

I hope everyone is enjoying their holidays thus far. We are currently looking for ways to remodel and make our website better for the membership. We have had a few meetings with the Executive Committee, so hopefully this coming year will see yet another new and improved modern look to our main line of communication. While this iteration of the website has been much better than the 2010 version, we have identified many areas of improvement, and most of it is because of feedback from our membership. Thank you very much for taking that time to be very direct about what we can do to help make this better. And if you haven't, there is still time to reach out to me or anyone on the board to say something.

For those of us on or near the path of totality in April, things are starting to heat up and boil! I have seen an uptick in all of our appearances in local media, and I'm going to try to post as much as I can (Rochester has been really hitting the pavement hard, great job!).



For those of you close enough to see your residents travel into the path, we are hoping you can assist by...

Supplying glasses to your residents before they leave, so the burden isn't completely on us, or else we may have another price gouging war with the supply shortage.

From the Buffalo-Niagara Falls region, we are estimating 750k to one million additional visitors – and it's off-peak for tourism. We already know we are going to be short glasses despite nearly one million pairs already here.

If you have ANY eclipse media-related links in your area, please [send it to me](#) – I want to document this momentous occasion as best as we can. It is a section that Janet started for us, and I would love to keep it going, and a major event such as a total solar eclipse is just the thing we need. But, as always, if there are other events that are publicized in your area, that is also something we'd like to post about!

Committee Update: PUBLICATIONS

Committee Chair: Brian Koehler

The MAPS Publications Committee is determined to not “rest on our laurels” - rather, we keep tinkering and refining our newsletters to continue to provide an enjoyable reading experience for all MAPS members.

And yes, we do have a new accent color for the winter issue! Where did this **GOLD** come from? It came from our MAPS logo...



Just as our previous issues have employed the official MAPS shades of **GREEN** and **BLUE**, we now proudly welcome **GOLD** into the rotation!

However, our refining of the Constellation goes beyond mere color schemes. We are also cooking up ways for members to enjoy our newsletters even more. Check out the final section of this issue for our NEW “Fun & Games” area. Break out your pencils and see if you can solve the MAPS-related puzzles!

Upcoming Deadlines for submitting content for the Constellation:

SPRING 2024

Friday, March 1, 2024

SUMMER 2024

Friday, June 7, 2024

FALL 2024

Friday, September 6, 2024

WINTER 2024

Friday, December 6, 2024



As always, we welcome feedback about the Constellation, along with suggestions for ways it can be improved:

- Too many photos?
- Not enough articles?
- Fun & Games just not working for you?

Please send any comments, suggestions, or general feedback to

publications@mapsplanetarium.org.

Committee Update: CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Committee Chair: Mark Percy

Firstly, I would like to thank Jordan Ecker and James Bauman for taking on an additional duty by joining the MAPS Constitution Review Committee. Their input was invaluable, and I believe their participation was fairly painless. By getting involved, our members make MAPS a stronger organization. I hope others answer the call to serve and take ownership of our society.

Next, I would like to thank everyone that took the time to read and consider our recommendations carefully. Our slate of updates passed by a wide margin. Thanks to these changes, MAPS committees are structured more appropriately, we have

adapted to the new IPS governance structure, and we have provided for proper oversight of our finances. The updated committee structures open new opportunities for you to get involved. We sincerely hope that more of our members will take active roles.

Next up is our set of suggested revisions to the MAPS Constitution. Our set of suggested revisions is brief and fairly simple. However, a higher standard of approval is necessary for this governing document. An upcoming article will explain the revisions and how the next vote will be conducted. Stay tuned and thank you again!

Committee Update: HISTORY

Committee Chair: John Meader

The MAPS History-Archives Committee has expanded this year beyond the one person committee it's been for the past twenty plus years. At the urging and support of our new MAPS president, Noreen Grice, the committee welcomes Sam Storch and Steve Russo. We have yet to meet on Zoom, but I will pull that together early in the new year. If anyone else is interested in the history of MAPS or the preservation of artifacts and documents, please [contact me](#) and we'll be glad to welcome you to the group.

We also just added photos, proceedings, and recordings of papers, workshops, and the Margaret Noble Address from this year's Stars For All conference. A big thank you to Noreen Grice and Brian Koehler for sharing the link to these valuable documents so they can be preserved in the MAPS Archives.

Committee Update: PROGRAM

Committee Chair: Tony Kilgore

Greetings, MAPS Membership!

At the MAPS business meeting at the 2023 Stars for All Conference, the Executive Committee had solicited planetariums that would be interested in hosting small Regional Meetings for this upcoming 2024 calendar year, in lieu of a formal MAPS conference. The thinking was, with people traveling for the Eclipses as well as it being an IPS year, this might make for a lessened financial burden, while still having face-to-face gatherings.

As of the conclusion of the November 2023 meeting of the MAPS Executive Committee, there was only one proposal to host a 2024 Regional Meeting, from the Treworgy Planetarium at Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut.

Following further discussion over the past month, Brian Koehler submitted a formal bid to the conference committee chairperson to change that regional meeting to a shortened MAPS conference.

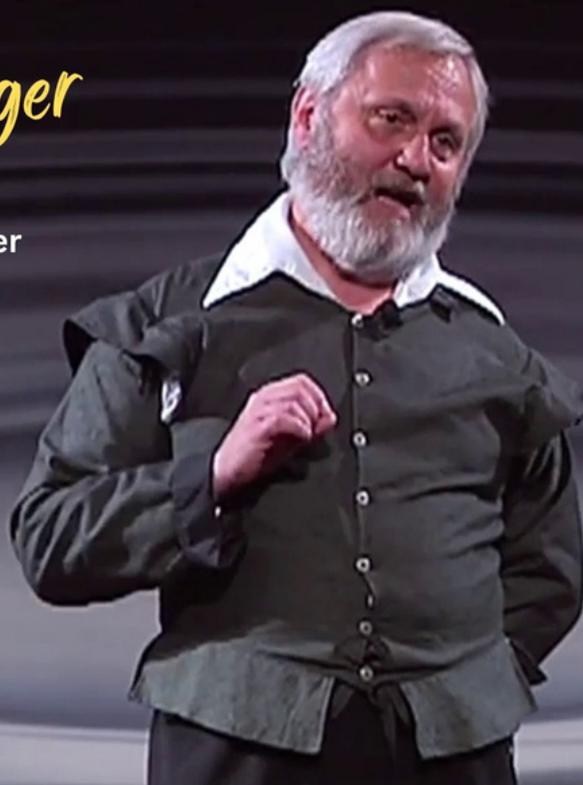
The Executive Committee discussed it at their December board meeting and has unanimously approved the bid. It is with great enthusiasm that I officially announce the 2024 MAPS Conference will be held in Mystic, CT from **Thursday-Sunday, June 20-23, 2024**. A HUGE congratulations and thank you to Brian and his staff for hosting us!

More information about the 2024 MAPS conference will be shared at the MAPS Virtual Meeting on January 15, 2024, and on our website following the meeting.

Galileo The Starry Messenger

A living history visit by the founder
of modern astronomy.

As seen at:
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Carnegie Science Center
mike-francis.com/sm.htm



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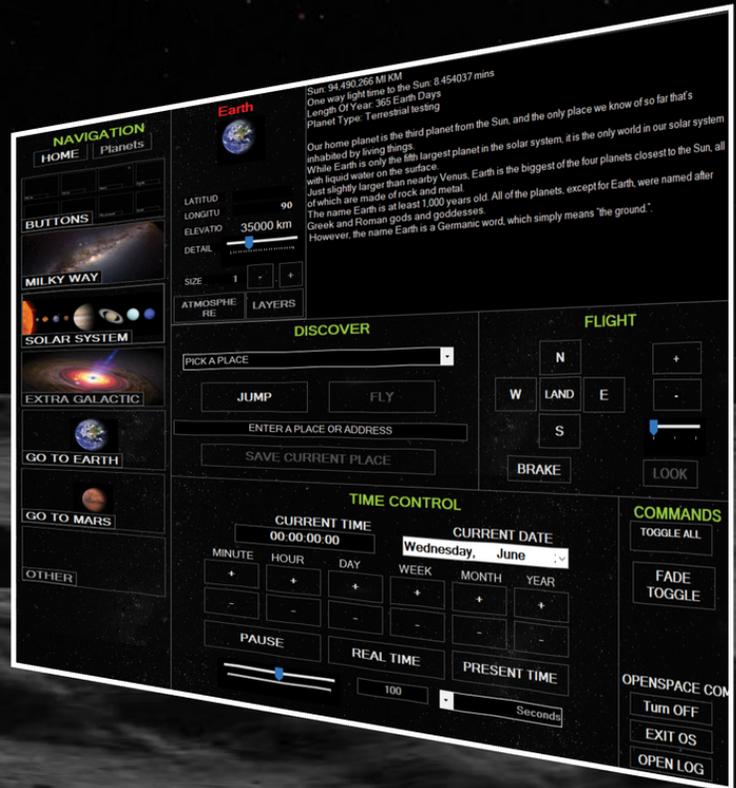
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FUN & GAMES

MAPS-themed Puzzles

Welcome to our NEW “Fun and Games” section of the Constellation! The MAPS Publications Committee is always looking to try new things, so we thought we would include some MAPS-related puzzles in this winter issue.

Grab a pencil and PRINT out the last few pages of this newsletter - you’ll want to make sure your print settings are set to **only print pages 50-52**, otherwise you will get 50+ pages flying out of your printer!

PUZZLE #1: Guess the year...



This is the year that the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society was formed.

Need a few hints?

The FIRST digit of the year is the number of constellations, in the “Western” view of the night sky, that begin with the letter “B.”

The SECOND digit of the year is how many known planets were in the Solar System when MAPS was formed (yes, I know, that’s the date we are trying to figure out!).

The THIRD digit of the year is the total number of rovers that the U.S. has successfully landed and operated on the planet Mars (to-date).

The FOURTH digit of the year is in the name of the rocket that propelled the Apollo Missions to the Moon - the rocket was called Saturn _.

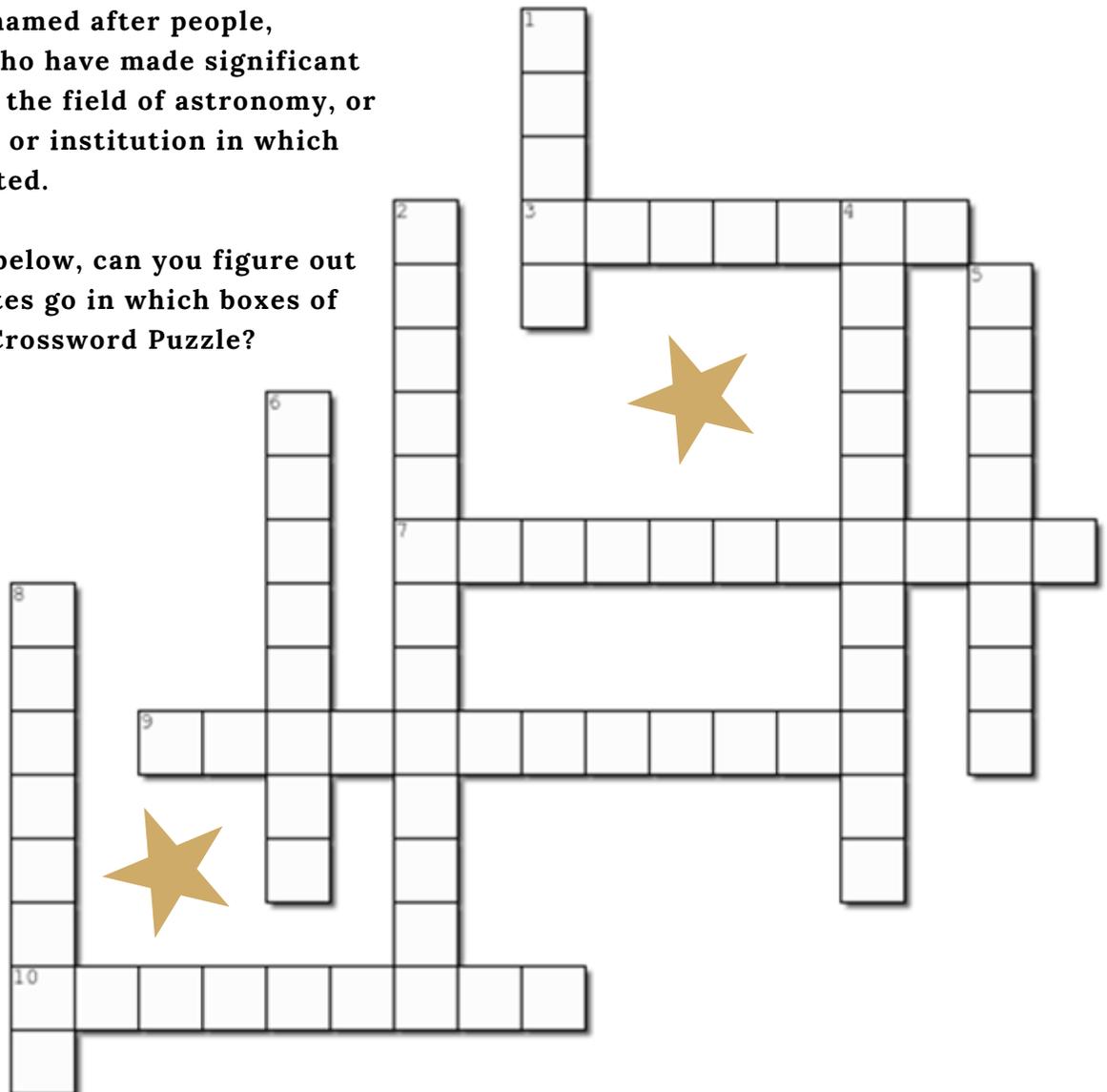
FUN & GAMES

MAPS-themed Puzzles

PUZZLE #2: MAPS State Crossword

We have a number of planetariums in our region that are named after people, usually people who have made significant contributions to the field of astronomy, or to the city, state or institution in which the dome is located.

Using the clues below, can you figure out which MAPS states go in which boxes of our first MAPS Crossword Puzzle?



Across

- 3. Whitworth Ferguson Planetarium
- 7. Treworgy Planetarium
- 9. Buhl Planetarium
- 10. Edelman Planetarium

Down

- 1. Maynard Jordan Planetarium
- 2. Charles Hayden Planetarium
- 4. Cormack Planetarium
- 5. Varia Planetarium
- 6. Irene V. Hylton Planetarium
- 8. Davis Planetarium

FUN & GAMES

MAPS-themed Puzzles

PUZZLE #3: MAPS Member Rebus

How well do you know the names of your fellow MAPS members? Below, there are clues to decipher the names of four MAPS members. For each member, we have only given you ONE initial - either first or last - along with ONE picture clue to either a first name or a last name. Write the full name of the MAPS member in the column to the right.

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

FULL NAME

S.





B.

M.



January	February	March
???	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December

W.

FUN & GAMES

MAPS-themed Puzzles

PUZZLE #4: Count the Stars

One final puzzle for those of you who have read the Constellation all the way through to its penultimate page! There are gold stars scattered throughout this issue of our quarterly newsletter. See how many stars you can find, and send your tally to publications@mapsplanetarium.org. The first MAPS member to send the correct number via email will receive a SPECIAL PRIZE in the mail just after the New Year!



(this counts as one!)

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A Wintry Sign-Off...



No, it hasn't snowed THIS MUCH in Connecticut... yet... But your MAPS friends from coastal New England planetariums would like to share how nice some domes and science centers look under a powdery blanket.

(image credit: Elliot Severn)



From Bridgeport to Mystic, all of Connecticut is gearing up, not just for the cold that winter brings, but the picturesque views that it leaves behind!

(image credit: Brian Koehler)



Happy Holidays from MAPS!
We look forward to seeing you in 2024!