

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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May Public Planetarium Presentations

7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. showings: May 5 and May 19

Visalia – The Sam B. Peña Planetarium, which is operated by the Tulare County Office of Education, is offering a new schedule of family-oriented shows for May. The first presentation, scheduled for Friday, May 5, is ideal for younger audiences. It will feature the popular “Our Sky Family” and “Rusty Rocket’s Last Blast.” The shows on Friday, May 19, are designed for families with older children. “Lunar Odyssey” and “The Explorers,” will be shown.

The Planetarium is located on the southwest corner of West Main and Woodland Avenue in Visalia in the Educational Enrichment Center. “These shows are a great way to learn about the worlds beyond our world and perhaps begin a family star-gazing tradition that can be enjoyed all summer long,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak.

Planetarium shows begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and feature the following presentations:

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May 5, 2006

7:00 p.m. "Our Sky Family"

8:00 p.m. "Rusty Rocket's Last Blast"

May 19, 2006

7:00 p.m. "Lunar Odyssey"

8:00 p.m. "The Explorers"

Our Sky Family

This fascinating show introduces the planets and the concept that we are part of a larger solar system. Students find themselves taken on a magical trip through the solar system, where cartoon personifications of the planets present photographs and information about themselves.

(Created specifically for Kindergarten and first grade students)

Rusty Rocket's Last Blast

After decades of teaching rocket rookies the basics of rocket physics, Rusty Rocket has announced that he will be retiring and that this will be his last blast. He already has plans for how he will spend his free time. Meanwhile, he has one final mission to command: an introductory tour of the solar system focusing on the variety of planetary environments. Rusty really emphasizes the immense distances between the planets. Rusty Rocket is a 35-minute presentation ideal for families with children in grades 1 through 5.

Lunar Odyssey

Come aboard as Trans-Lunar Tours takes you on a fantastic *Lunar Odyssey*. Throughout the trip, experts in lunar mythology, history, science, and astronomy give you a guided tour of the awesome beauty and mysteries of Earth's nearest neighbor in space.

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The Explorers

This 45-minute presentation focuses on the human spirit of exploration throughout time and space. The planetarium's dome is used to identify constellations, to observe what daily motion can tell us about navigation, and to study changes in the sky as the observer's latitude changes. During a live section in the program, the audience will try their new knowledge to navigate from Tahiti to Hawaii using techniques used by Polynesians for thousands of years. Then...it's on to Mars!

Show tickets can be purchased at the Impact Center Office 30 minutes before show time or in advance on weekdays between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$4 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. The public can save one dollar by purchasing the two-show package. Group rates are also available. Shows start promptly on time. No late seating is offered once the planetarium doors close. For information, call 737-6334.

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