

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces:

Peña Planetarium offers two March evening shows

March 13 & 27, 2009 • 2500 Burrel Ave., Visalia

Visalia - The Sam B. Peña Planetarium, operated by the Tulare County Office of Education, is pleased to offer the following public shows this month:

March 13, 2009, 7:00 p.m. – *Secret of the Cardboard Rocket*

Climb aboard a magical cardboard rocket with two young children and depart on an extraordinary ride through space. Experience a breathtaking, up-close look at our solar system's planets. You'll see each fascinating planet as never before — including Mercury, which has the shortest year, and Mars, the famous red planet with its volcano that is larger than the state of Utah! You'll zoom through the crackling ice-and-rock rings of the "gas giant" Saturn, right after you investigate another "gas giant" — Jupiter, whose size equals 1,000 "earths." You'll navigate around our other planets, and find yourself hurtling toward the outer reaches of our system to our final destination — the remote, frozen planet of Pluto. This show utilizes the planetarium's new full-dome technology.

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March 27, 2009, 7:00 p.m. - *The Ring of Fire: The Bright Stars of Winter*

This program highlights the constellation Orion – the great hunter – and the “Ring of Fire,” which is also known as the Winter Hexagon. *The Ring of Fire: The Bright Stars of Winter* is the third segment in the “Tulare County Night Skies” series, which is produced in conjunction with the Tulare Astronomical Association, and authored and narrated by the Association’s president, Dave Adalian. After the 20-minute program, the audience can meet with members of the Tulare Astronomical Association, who have telescopes available outdoors for stargazing. This program is recommended for older children and adults.

The Planetarium is located on the southwest corner of West Main Street and Woodland Drive in Visalia, in the Educational Enrichment Center.

Tickets can be purchased at the Impact Center office 30 minutes before show time or in advance on weekdays between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$4 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. It is strongly recommended that tickets be purchased in advance as shows often sell out. No late seating is offered once the planetarium doors close. For information, call (559) 737-6334.

For more information about the Peña Planetarium, visit www.tcoe.org/ImpactCenter.

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