



## Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan

Besser Museum, Museum of Alpena Michigan

Museum of Alpena, Michigan, 491 Johnson Street 49707-9998

Enc: (1) June goals

(2) Tanabata

(3) Groups

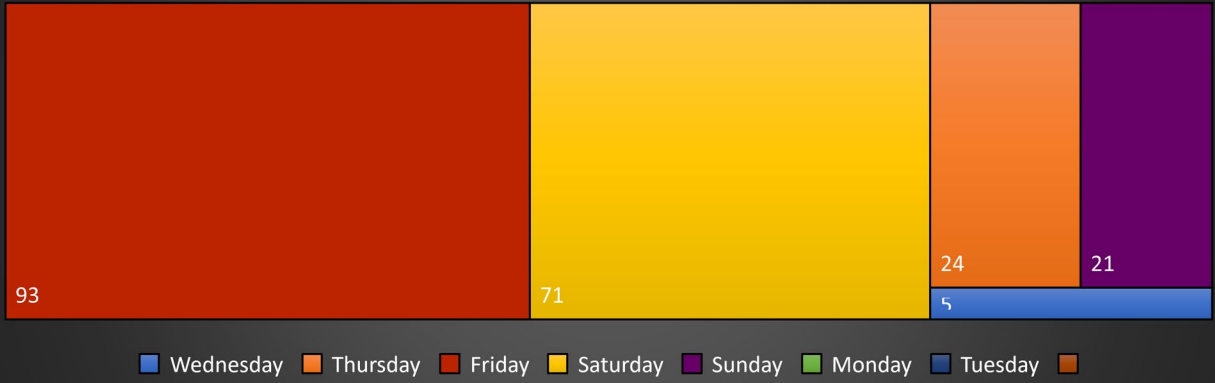
(4) Attendance

(5) July goals

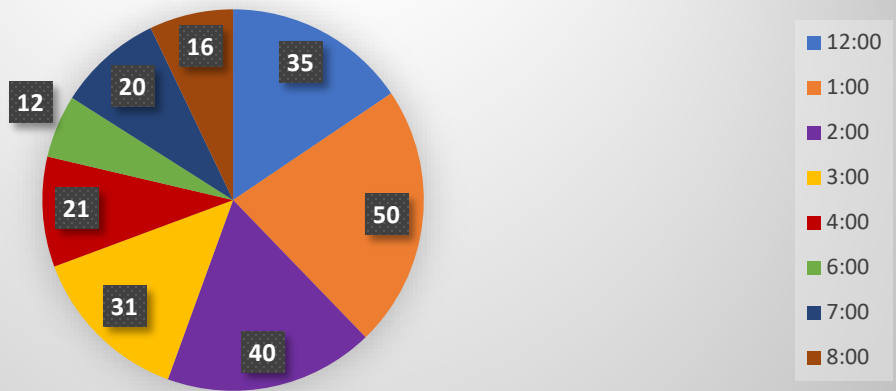
1. June 2019 was a hectic and busy month, filled with over 1,000 children, tourists, and guests, suffice to say, this will likely be the highest attendance that the planetarium will see all year. While Despite this mass exodus of people, a few minor projects were still progressed, and one major event was completed.
2. Throughout all of June I was inspired to develop and implement the Tanabata star festival, which was held on July 6<sup>th</sup>. The reasoning behind my wanting to accomplish this is nothing more than a passion of astronomy and foreign culture, and a desire to share those passions with others. For 2019's Tanabata, there was collaboration between several organizations in Alpena, like the Library, the Unlucky Cat Café, Thundercon, and several of Alpena's local Japanese people. This provided the event with food and extra events for people to participate in, allowing any passersby to participate in a small list of activities.
  - a. Since this was the very first time that the Museum has run a Tanabata festival, there were a few minor setbacks that can be implemented next year. These were a lack of signs and fanfare drawing people in, no easy way for guests to learn about Tanabata's meaning, and a lack of bamboo tress for decorating. For next year, I will attempt to implement these aspects from the start, as well as to increase the scale at which the festival is held, allowing us to spread this tradition to even more people.
    - i. Other aspects that I believe I could improve on would be a general increase of activities, allowing for more game stalls, food vendors, and other Tanabata related activities. I also hope to get a play going next time and in the following years of this tradition carries onwards, which will likely mean the collaboration with either the local theater or maybe even the local high school drama club. I will be keeping a journal of ideas throughout the year on this, and I will likely start reaching out to people in spring or later winter 2020.
  - b. Since this report is being written after the fact; we recorded close to 100 people on the night of the 6<sup>th</sup>. Which does not sound like a lot in retrospect, but the crowd was borderline overwhelming, and if this event is going to grow, it is likely that more people will have to be brought in the following years.
    - i. While this is merely rhetorical, we had one older Japanese man at the party who was incredibly happy to see a Tanabata event. He seemed touched by not just our actions, but by the welcoming spirit of Alpena in general. It was exciting to see our festival have such an impact on someone.
3. While June was wrapping up field trip season, this month saw just as many students and groups of people as may did. Adding in Log cabin Day, and our group numbers and planetarium admission was higher than it ever has been before. Since group numbers are still really high, they will be left out of the monthly graphs, so as to not skew the data.

- a. Scheduled groups for field trips brought in 637 people throughout all of June 2019. These were mostly school children wrapping up their final days in sessions, but there was an elderly group who booked a planetarium show, as well as the summer school kids who came in late June. The shows *Capcom Go* and *Accidental Astronauts* was primarily played for these events, with the exception of one *Michigan Skies Live* show for the elderly group.
  - b. Log cabin Day 2019. Our \$1 ticket prices drew in a lot of people for the planetarium, in total, we had 140 people and 1 dog watch *Capcom Go* on that day, spread out over 5 separate shows. This is only how many people attended and I feel comfortable saying that more people bought tickets than actually showed up, as our last two time slots had low attendance, only having 6 and 17 guests for each one respectively.
4. Public attendance for June was surprisingly high, considering that the first two weeks of the month were limited in public showtimes. It is obvious from the numbers that the summer tourists are here in Alpena. With a total of 214 regular attendees, this month saw a vast increase from previous month attendances. Added in with Log cabin Day and group numbers, the planetarium brought in over 1,000 people during the month June, 1/5 of our total annual attendance from 2018.
  - a. Points of interest for this: Friday had the highest attendance this month, thanks to the 28<sup>th</sup> which saw 56 people. It was rather wet and stormy that day, so every time slot from 1:00pm-8:00pm was had attendance. The most popular show is once again *Dinosaurs*, grossing more than 30 more ticket sales than the next highest selling show, *Capcom Go*. This change might be due to the tourists up here at the moment. A family of varying age groups is likely looking for a show that will greatly appeal to the younger members, while also entertaining the older ones. This is just speculation though and is based entirely on my own observations throughout the month.
5. June was busy, but July will be busy as well. Throughout July there will be several events happening for the planetarium. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, we had the Tanabata festival. The 13<sup>th</sup> is the Moon viewing/ smores party at Rockport, the 20<sup>th</sup> will have the free family fun day, the 25<sup>th</sup> will have the Telescope class in Gaylord, and on the 27<sup>th</sup> I will be taking off for Spitz Summer institute. There isn't much to say about each of these events, as they're either limited in scope, or are have already been discussed previously.

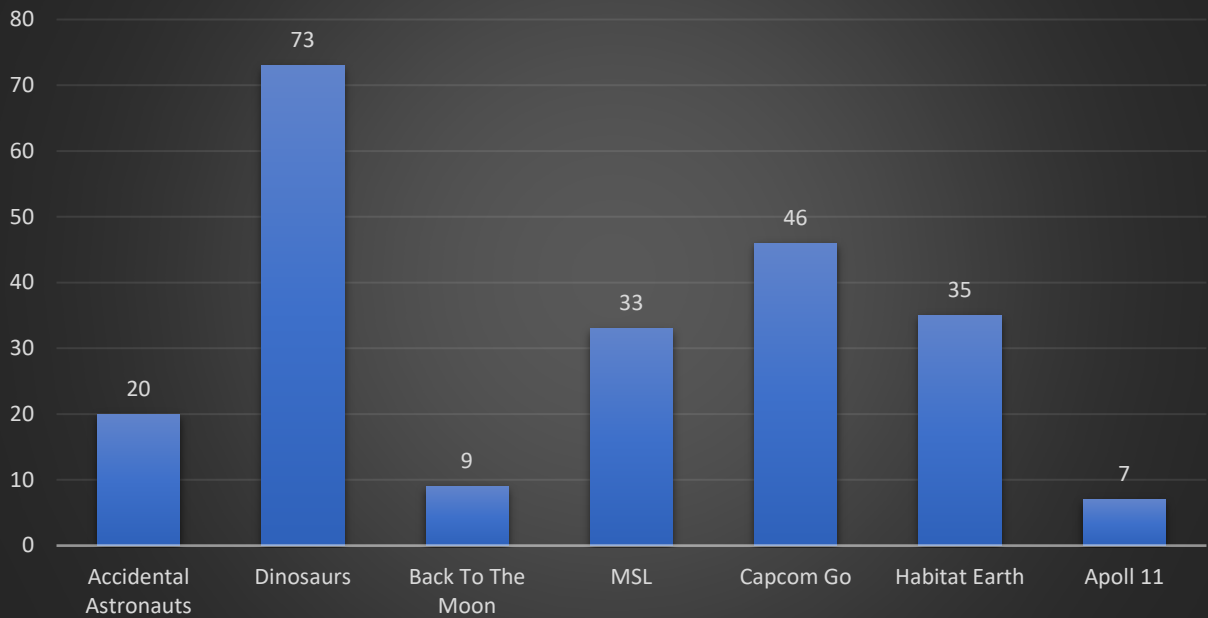
## JUNE ATTENDANCE



## Showtimes



## Shows





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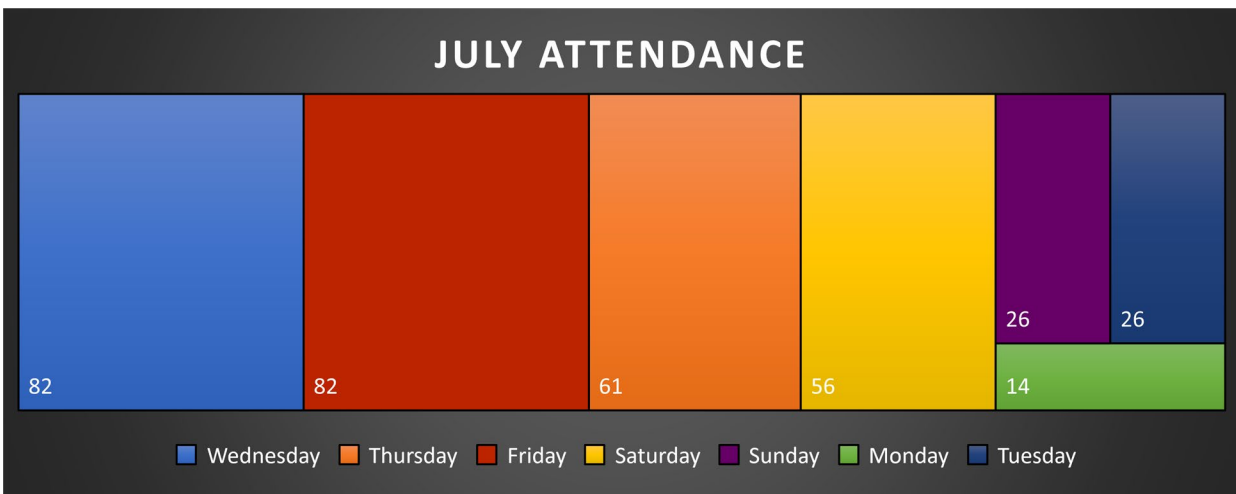
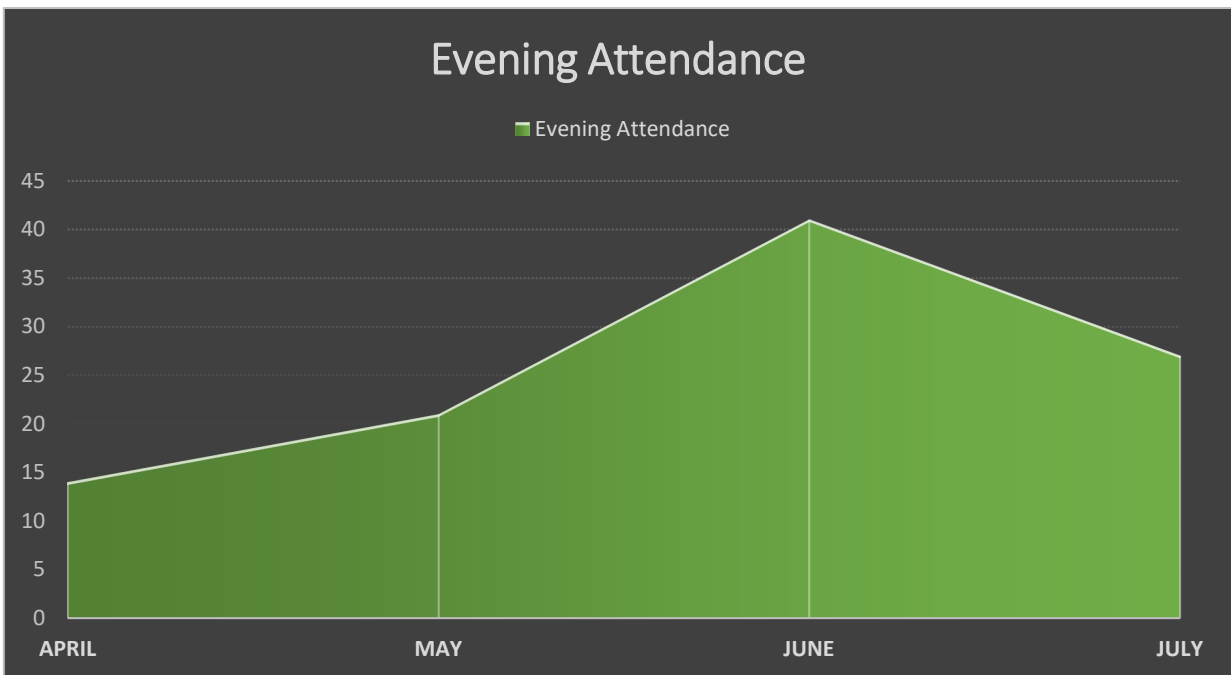
Enc: (1) July goals

- (2) Events
- (3) Evening showings
- (4) Attendance
- (5) August goals

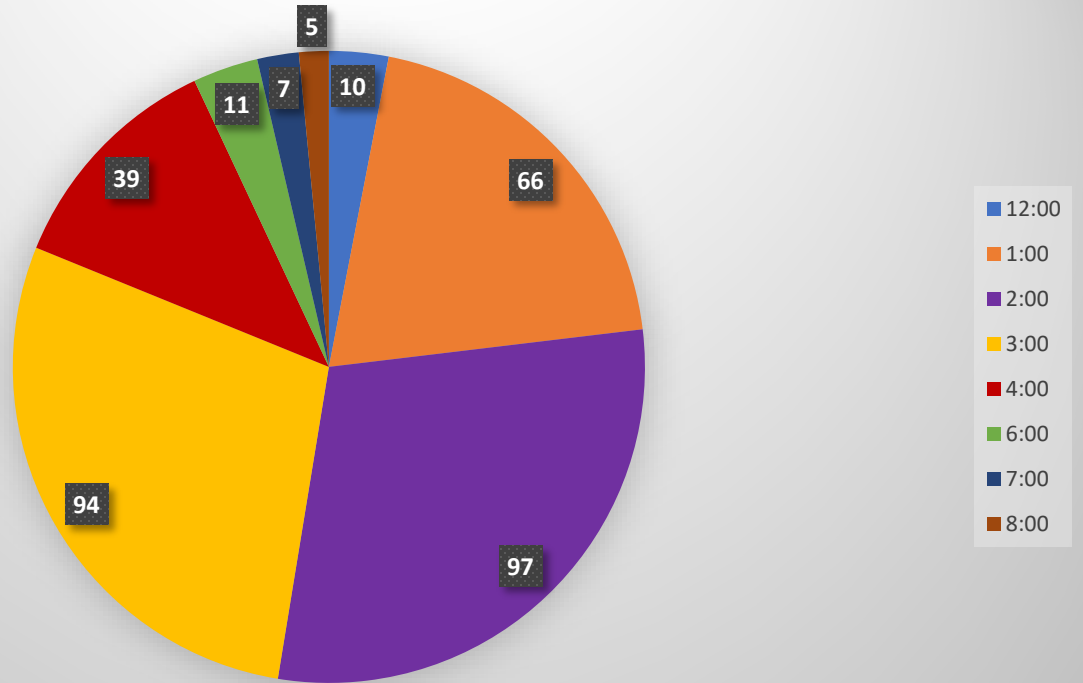
1. July 2019 was a departure from June, as the amount of people and groups coming through the planetarium were significantly smaller. While July was remis on large groups in comparison to previous months, the number of events taking place were more than enough to keep busy.
  - a. The overall plan for July 2019 centered around getting through the events and groups coming through, and to continue to present quality planetarium shows for general admissions. I can report that these goals were indeed accomplished, and the whole month went buy smoothly and without issue.
2. Throughout July there were several planned events involving the planetarium and/or its staff. These events were Tanabata, Meteor's & Smores at Rockport, Free Family Fun day, and the Gaylord Library telescope class. Tanabata was covered in June's report, so I will leave that out for July's, and instead focus on the 2 events that were completed successfully.
  - a. Meteor's & Smores. This event, held on the 13<sup>th</sup>, was fun and exciting. A lot of people showed up to take advantage of our telescopes, and we had clear enough conditions to show off the strength of our telescopes. Guests were able to see the terrain on the moon, the great red spot of Jupiter, and even the rings of Saturn. There were people of all ages at the event, and nearly everyone spoken to had glowing praise for us. It's apparent that we impacted a lot of people at Rockport that night, both by observing and talking with people. I even noticed several people from the event at the planetarium the next few days, showing that they were excited to come visit us after seeing us at Rockport. Events like this are nice to have, and it'll be interesting to see how these events evolve as astronomy club develops in the future.
  - b. Free Family Fun Day. The open house style showing for this event seemed to go rather well for guests. A lot of people brought their kids in that day, and having an open door allowed those kids to come and go as they desired, which likely allowed them to increase their enjoyment of the museum as a whole. Talking with several families and guests, I was able to hear how happy people were to have an event like this one. Alpena was really crowded on the day of the event, so allowing people to have something to do away from the large crowds downtown seemed appealing for families. In total, we had 146 people come through the planetarium doors that day and sit down for the show. Not all of them stayed the entire length of Accidental Astronauts running, but most of them at least finished the current airing of that show. The outreach and goodwill performed on Family Fun Day seems to have been received positively overall, and I'm sure if anyone is back in Alpena next year, they'll stop by and see what's happening.
3. Now that July is over, our trial with evening shows is also complete. Overall, the late-night showings and open museum seemed to have mostly gone by without attention or care from the general public. Since starting in April, 108 people attended planetarium shows for our extended hours, with the highest numbers being in June, with 41 people. April had 14, May had 21, and July had 27 guests (Graph found at end of

report). These numbers seem to indicate a pattern of peak attendance in June, and a decrease after that. If this trend were to continue, then it is a good thing that July is the last month that we are having evening shows.

- a. I know that there was discussion of repeating late showings in 2020, so I have a few suggestions on how to improve the late-night blocks.
  - i. closing earlier at 8:00pm instead of 9:00, since 8:00pm was consistently low. Also implementing a 6:00pm time, as was done in June.
  - ii. I would also recommend eliminating April and May entirely, as their low attendance hardly made it worth staying open. Tourists didn't make up a large part of our attendance until June.
  - iii. I know that you also discussed opening on Monday/ Friday for late nights, but I have very little metrics on Monday attendance, and as a result, cannot advise on that one way or another.
  
4. July general attendance remained high and in total, 288 people attended normally scheduled planetarium shows. These numbers are little deflated compared to real numbers though, as Monday/ Tuesday records were not kept for most of the month.
  - a. The most popular show was Capcom Go, with over 100 people seeing it. There were a lot of requests to watch Capcom Go as well, this show's popularity really shined through for the anniversary of Apollo 11.
  - b. Fridays were the most popular day that I have records for, especially with a couple bad weather days really boosting the attendance numbers. Friday July 5<sup>th</sup> had 69 guests all throughout the day, which is exceptionally high for any single nonevent day. I believe it was raining all day on the 5<sup>th</sup>, creating this perfect storm of planetarium attendance.



## Showtimes



## Shows

