



Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Besser Museum, Museum of Alpena Michigan
Museum of Alpena, Michigan, 491 Johnson Street 49707-9998

From: Planetarium Coordinator of Besser Museum

To: Executive Director of Besser Museum

Subj: December Action report

Ref: Hawaiian Islands Live (HIL)

Powers of Ten

Art & Astronomy

Keeping Up With The World (Keeping Up)

- Enc: (1) Projects
(2) Public Outreach
(3) Conclusion

1. Projects worked on through the month of January 2019 are wide ranging and include four separate live show productions. Two of the live shows being developed are continuing productions, HIL and Powers of Ten. The third show is untitled, as it is only a 15-minute pre-show for the Art & Astronomy kids program; more information concerning this show and Art & astronomy will be delivered under section (2), public outreach. The final show is Keeping Up, which is a new prospective show that focuses on science, news, and technology. The Coordinator is hoping to regularly implement this show each month.
 - a. HIL: The current state of HIL is that the show is being dissected, and will longer be one large wide-ranging production, but 4 average length shows of 20-30 minutes each. This split comes from the fact that the show's topics have become too specific to be adequately fit into one production. Previously, HIL was designed to cover Hawaii's unique geology, ecology, and astronomy. However, as more time and effort were put into each category of the show, it became clear to the Planetarium Coordinator that attempting to fit all of this information into a ~40-minute time frame resulted in an overly saturated mess. Making it all digestible and entertaining was not properly feasible with the previous model, so now each topic will instead receive its own standalone program. However, for groups or audience members looking for a little of everything, a fourth show which will attempt to summarize the whole program, and act as a sort of teaser for each sub show, will also be produced. This summary show differs from the previous HIL by specifically avoiding anything other than a brief overview of each topic of discussion, only highlighting each topic's more unique or exciting aspects.
 - i. While this new type of programming is going to be better for the final production of HIL, it will be a considerable amount of work to complete all four programs. While the majority of research for the shows is complete, there is still information that must be gained, as aspects of the show that were once 15 minutes or less, are now being extended out to thirty 30 minutes or more. On top of requiring more qualitative information, these shows also require that this information be visually engaging to the audience. In order to ensure that HIL excites guests with its visuals, the Coordinator must find or create planetarium compatible resources that are relevant to the subject at hand, as well as unique. The combined effort required to properly control this schism is indeed great, but far from impossible.

a 2-hour event in which children aged 8-11, will explore certain astronomical, scientific, and artistic topics via the lenses of fulldome curriculum, interactive games and events, and arts and crafts. The goal of this program is to engage children about educational topics that may excite or intrigue them, while also providing them with a creative outlet in which to explore these topics with.

- a. The planetarium show for the first activity will be about star creation and the way light interacts with us inside our own galaxy. These topics will be explored by highlighting nebula and stellar nurseries visible in our sky, as well as their appearance up close. The show will also cover the effects of diffuse clouds throughout the milky way galaxy and how these clouds have affected astronomy here on earth. The live part of the show will only last 15 to 20 minutes and will be utilizing the planetarium's showier features in order to better illustrate the impact that nebulous gas has on Astronomy. Once the live show has completed, guests will be presented with the fulldome video "A Photon's Journey", which will explore star creation more in-depth, as well as how the light from said star manages to travel a thousand light years and into the eyes of a star gazer on earth.
 - i. While there have only been a few reservations for the Art & Astronomy program as of the time of this report's completion, the Coordinator will continue to prepare for the all three programs. Since this program is so new, it is possible that the community will just need time to properly realize that it even exists, and as a result, the other 2 activities planned through March will continue with the assumption that as long as the community is gaining awareness of this program's existence, then the museum is at least making progress towards bringing people in. If there's ever low or no attendance at one of the activities, then the resources for that show can just be recycled for repeats of the program another month.
3. The month of January 2019 may appear slow on the surface, what with a somewhat low attendance rate, but this low attendance means that Coordinator's attention is focused on development, rather than presentation. The new shows being developed are ambitious in their design, and when complete, will add a significant amount of new live content to the planetarium's library. With a mixture of live shows and group programs coming to the planetarium, 2019 is looking to be an eventful and exciting year. It is the Coordinator's hope that the shows and events created here will have a lasting impact on the museum and the community as a whole for years to come.