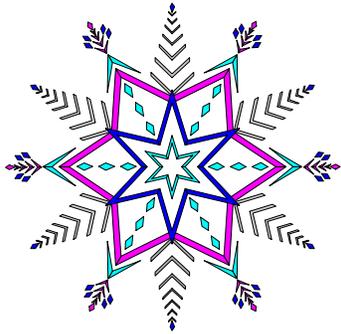




CONSTELLATION

Winter 2007, No. 4



*“Winter either bites with its
teeth or lashes with its tail”
~ Old Montenegrin Proverb*

Save the Date

**MAPS 2008 Conference
May 14-17, 2008
in Schenectady, NY**

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Attention Voters!

We have an election coming up for MAPS Board Members.

Be on the lookout for your voting ballot in early January 2008.



The Nomination Committee has received a large slate of nominees for this important role within MAPS. We will be electing three members to serve in this capacity. As our bylaws state, nominations are taken until November and ballots are distributed in January such that the election process is completed by the end of January. The winners begin their duties at the conclusion of the next annual business meeting.

The Audit Committee serves as tellers for the election. Be sure to use the envelope enclosed with your ballot so that it is mailed to the proper address. Ballots received after the deadline will not be counted.

This is a good time to think about how you might help MAPS become a stronger professional society by being an active member. Run for office next year, join a committee and present a paper or workshop at the next meeting.

Jerry Vinski, MAPS Nominating Committee Chair
jvinski@raritanval.edu

MAPS Education Mentoring Network

If you are starting out in the planetarium field or have recently moved to a new facility with unfamiliar equipment or curriculum, and have questions for a fellow educator, technician, or coordinator, our mentors can help. Our field tends to be a specialty in which one often finds oneself operating single handedly without the benefit of immediate consultation with a colleague facing the same challenges. To find a mentor in your area, visit the MAPS website: www.maps-planetarium.org

CONTACT!

MAPS Executive Committee

Officers (2007-2009)

President

Gloria Villalobos
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DR. FRED C. HESS — 1920-2007

By Joe Rao

Well known astronomer and popular lecturer at New York's Hayden Planetarium, Dr Fred C. Hess, passed away last Thursday morning after a three-year battle with cancer. He was 87-years old.

Among those of us who promote the science of astronomy in the Tri-State Metropolitan area, Dr. Hess had a status worthy of Joe DiMaggio. Let me explain with this analogy: It was back in 1999 that I was delivering a slide presentation on the Leonid meteors at the Andrus Planetarium in Yonkers. Somewhere in the middle of my talk, I mentioned that when I was 10-years old I attended a sky show at Hayden, and the lecturer behind the console provided a dialogue that literally lifted me right up out of my seat.

As I said those words, I brought up a slide of Dr. Hess and before I could say anything else, the entire audience applauded spontaneously.

They obviously were among his disciples.

The next day I called Fred and told him that if Joe DiMaggio was baseball's greatest living ballplayer, then certainly – so far as the general public was concerned – he was the greatest living planetarium astronomer!

Indeed, to some, Dr. Fred Hess was the "Evangelist of Astronomy." To others, he was the Dean of New York stargazers. His "official" title at Hayden was Instructor of Astronomy and Navigation, although he was well-versed in all aspects of science. He was a long-time professor of physical science at SUNY Maritime College at Fort Schuyler in the Bronx, and even authored a very popular book, "Chemistry Made Simple" back in 1955. For four years, during the late '60s and early '70s he also served as the Science Editor and on-camera weathercaster for WPIX/Channel 11.

And as a testimony to his abilities as a lecturer, in 1975 he was the recipient of the prestigious SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Truth be told, nobody ever fell asleep at a Fred Hess lecture. Actually, some of Fred's presentations were more along the lines of a sermon as opposed to a formal lecture. He was without a question of doubt, one of the most dynamic and powerful speakers you would ever hear.

Many of his colleagues at Hayden recognized this as well.

In 1984, Long Island's Custer Institute arranged for Fred and his long time friend and colleague, Dr. Ken Franklin (who passed away in June), to have asteroids named for them (respectively, 2844 Hess and 2845 Franklin). At the ceremony, Dr. Franklin remarked that at many speaking engagements he had always had the unenviable task of having to follow Dr. Hess. "But," he added, "should my asteroid have a smaller orbital eccentricity than his, then at long last I will finally catch him!"

Yet, it wasn't only Fred's resonant voice that made him a popular raconteur. I once asked him if he would reveal his secret on how he was always able to hold an audience's attention and he answered with four words:

(Continued on page 9)

Proposed Changes in the By-Laws Constitutional Review Committee

Jan Russo, Steve Russo, Megan Dominguez

The Constitution Review Committee has been reviewing the By-Laws thoroughly and has noticed that it has not been updated in several years. In many places, the language does not make provisions for electronic communication. In other places, the language could be reworded to make procedures more clear.

With this in mind, our team has made suggested revisions that we are presenting to you now for thoughtful consideration and vote at the 2008 conference.

Please note that these changes are being submitted to you in accordance with Article IX, Section 1: "These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting if the amendment has been sent to every member at least thirty days prior to the meeting at which it is to be voted upon."

Please read over the accompanying proposed changes. We have put our notes in parenthesis and *Italics* so that you understand the changes.

Article IV Committees

- **Section 1.** Standing committees of the Society shall be: Audit, Constitution Review, Membership, Nominating, Program and Publications. Committee chairs shall be appointed by the president.

Proposed: Section 1. Standing committees of the Society shall be: Audit, Constitutional Review, Membership, Nominating, Program, Publications, Awards, Education, Web Site, and Historian/Archivist. Committee chairs shall be appointed by the president.

(According to the definition of "Standing Committees" in Roberts, we have added Education, Awards, Web site, and Historian/Archivist.)

- **Section 7.** Upon publication, the **CONSTELLATION** shall be mailed to all members of the Society.

Proposed: Section 7. Upon publication, the **CONSTELLATION** shall be mailed, and/or electronically transmitted to all members of the Society.

(Reflects the "computer age")

- **Section 11.** The constitution review committee shall advise the president as to the constitutionality of policies, procedures, motions and proposed amendments, and periodically update the constitution and by-laws.

Proposed: Section 11. The constitutional review committee shall advise the president as to the constitutionality of policies, procedures, motions and proposed amendments, and periodically update the constitution and by-laws. This committee should consist of a "chairman" appointed by the President, and at least two other members appointed by the chairman.

(Constitutional Review Committee should have more than two members to discuss important issues. I believe we discussed the idea of needing less than three, but I think the final outcome was "at least two other members")

**Article V
Nominations and Elections**

- **Section 1.** Officers shall be elected on a mail-in ballot by the membership in January.

Proposed: Section 1. Officers shall be elected on a mail-in or electronic ballot by the membership in January.

(In case we go to e-mail ballots)

- **Section 2** The nominating committee shall submit a slate to the executive committee at least thirty days before ballots are to be mailed.

Proposed: Section 2 A All nominations must be submitted in writing or by e-mail with the “second” submitted in writing or by e-mail by November 1st.

Section 2 B The Nominating Committee shall submit a slate of candidates to the executive committee by November 15th.

Section 2 C The nominated candidates must provide the Nominating Chairman with a biography no later than November 30th. If a biography is not received by that date, then no biography will be provided to the membership for that candidate.

(We need the above time line to keep things in check)

- **Section 3.** Additional nominations may be made by members of the Society on a mail-in basis. Each mail-in nomination must have the second of a member of the Society.

Proposed: Section 3. The nominating committee will compile the slate and the biographies and submit it to the Publications chair to be published in the Winter Solstice edition of the Constellation, and/or electronically transmitted to the membership.

(We do not need to allow for more candidates AFTER the original slate is set. As long as the nominations deadlines are set, additional candidates may slow down the election process.)

- **Section 6.** The audit committee shall act as tellers for the annual election.

Proposed: Section 6 A The audit committee shall act as tellers for the annual election.

Section 6 B The Audit Committee shall stamp each ballot with a “date received”. Any Ballot received after the deadline printed on the ballot will not be counted.

Section 6 C Write in votes will not be counted.

Section 6 D Election results will be announced by the Audit Committee during the business meeting at the annual conference, and the Spring Issue of the Constellation, and/or electronically.

(The above more clearly defines how the votes are tallied.)

- **Section 7** Special elections may be called by the executive committee provided that the membership receives a call for nominations at least 45 days in advance of the date on which ballots are to be mailed.

Proposed: Section 7 A All ballots must be saved by the Audit Committee through the annual meeting.

Section 7 B Inquiries concerning a given election shall be made to the President within 30 days after the announcement of election results.

Article VI Meetings

- **Section 2.** Pressing business occurring between meetings may be conducted between the president and the general membership through the mail and/or electronically.

Proposed: Section 2. Pressing business occurring between meetings may be conducted between the president and the general membership through the mail or electronically.

(The computer age)

- **Section 3.** The executive committee shall meet at its own discretion, but shall always meet just prior to and business meeting of the Society.

Proposed: Section 3. The executive committee shall meet at its own discretion, but shall always meet just prior to the annual business meeting of the Society.

(Correcting a typo)

Article VIII General

- **Section 1.** All books of account, minutes of meetings, committee reports and other records of the Society shall be available to any member at reasonable times and upon request to the secretary in writing.

Proposed: Section 1. All books of account, minutes of meetings, committee reports and other records of the Society shall be available to any member at reasonable times and upon request to the secretary in writing and/or electronically.

(Computer age)

- **Section 2.** Complaints, suggestions, and items to be placed on the agenda shall be made in writing to the secretary who shall present them to the appropriate standing committee or executive committee for investigation and action as deemed appropriate.

Proposed: Section 2. Complaints, suggestions, and items to be placed on the agenda shall be made in writing and/or electronically to the secretary who shall present them to the appropriate standing committee or executive committee for investigation and action as deemed appropriate.

(Computer age)

Article IX Amendment

- **Section 1.** These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting if the amendment has been sent to every member at least thirty days prior to the meeting at which it is to be voted upon.

Proposed: Section 1. These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting, or by mail and/or electronically, if the amendment has been sent to every member at least thirty days prior to the vote.

(Computer age)

MEMBER NEWS

Fundraising for Novins Planetarium getting closer to \$1.5M goal

TOMS RIVER, NJ — The Ocean County College Foundation's "Reach for the Stars" campaign has received more than \$1.3 million to date in pledges, donations and grants in support of the renovation and renewal of the Robert J. Novins Planetarium, Toms River.

According to a press release, the campaign is under \$200,000 away from meeting its \$1.5 million goal.

Among the campaign's major supporters, the Ocean County College Foundation's "An Evening Under the Stars" gala netted more than \$200,000, which was donated to the "Reach for the Stars" campaign. Also, the foundation recently pledged an additional \$200,000.

"The Novins Planetarium has been bringing the universe to local school children, Ocean County College students and community members for over 30 years," said Sandy S. Broughton, director of the Ocean County College Foundation. "The foundation is dedicated to the renovation and renewal of the planetarium and we look forward to the next 30 years."

While the campaign is still in full swing, the planetarium remains closed for regular programming. However, planetarium staff continue to pursue ways to reach out to the community and keep its goal of space exploration and space education at the forefront.

Gloria Villalobos, Novins Planetarium director, recently became president of the Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society (MAPS), one of the oldest and largest regional planetarium associations in the United States. MAPS members represent some of the largest and best known planetariums, as well as small and mid-sized public, private and educational installations.

"It's a great honor to have been elected president and I look forward to being able to give back to the organization," Villalobos said. "I intend to work on helping to increase awareness of planetariums within our communities. That is something that's vital to the success and future of all our members."

In other planetarium news, students at the Milford Brook School, Manalapan, became part of a space mission when their signatures were launched aboard NASA's space shuttle Discovery on mission STS-120 on Oct. 23. According to the press release, Teresa St. Angelo, a Novins Planetarium lecturer and teacher at the Milford Brook School, played a key role in getting her school involved and also helped coordinate support from the Novins Planetarium for the project.

Last May, Milford Brook School pupils signed their names to a poster over the course of two days, during which time they enjoyed space related items, models and activities on loan from the Novins Planetarium. The signatures went into space last week as part of Discovery's mission to the International Space Station.

The Ocean County College Foundation is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to the growth and development of the college through scholarships, endowments and capital and special projects.

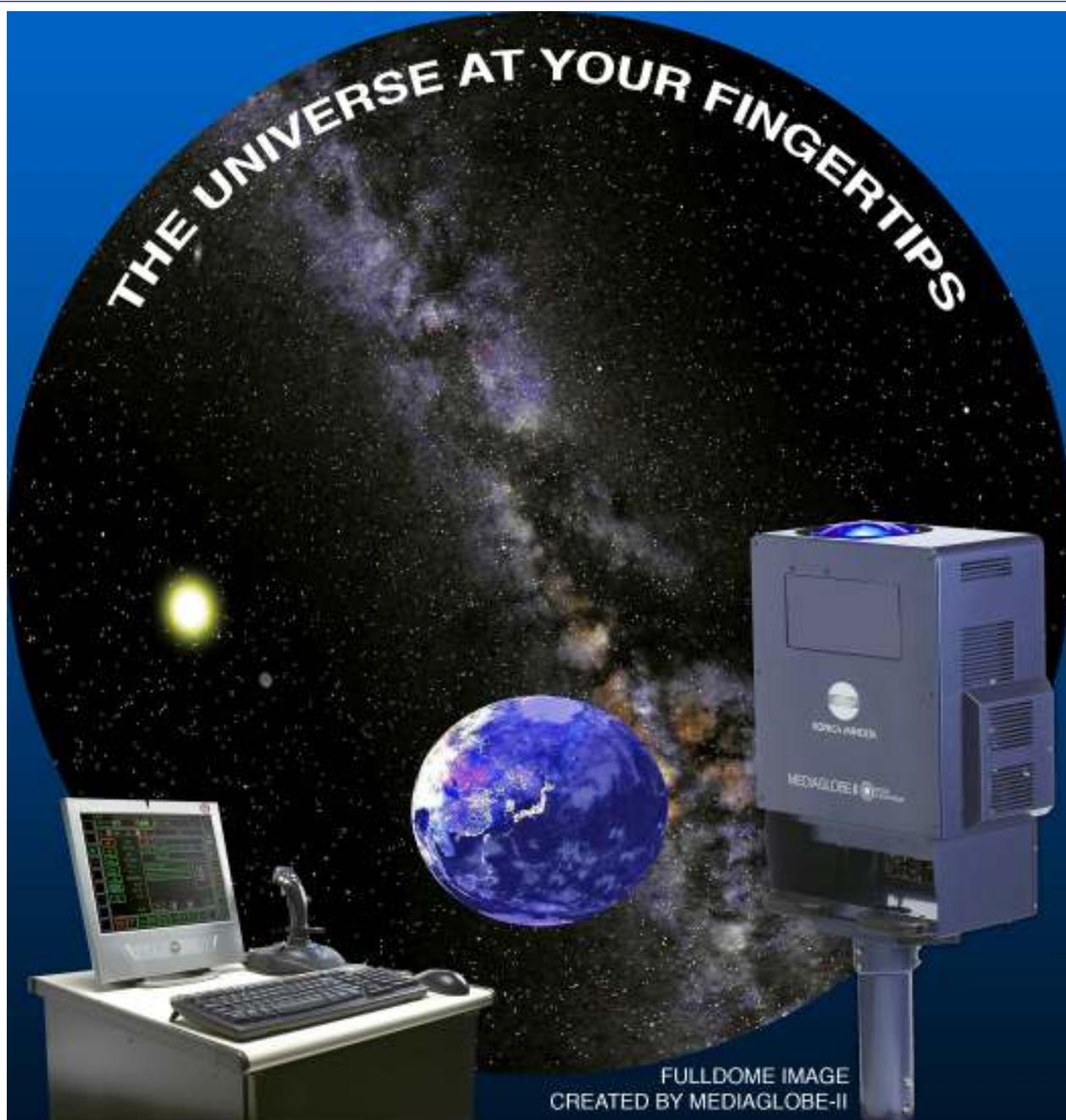
DUES REMINDER

Membership renewals will be mailed in January. Please return your renewal with payment promptly to the Treasurer. Thank you for your ongoing support!



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(Member News Continues on Page 8)



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KONICA MINOLTA

MEMBER NEWS

This gift includes the sun, the moon and stars: Foundations will install robotic observatory on roof of Plymouth school

By Tamara Race, The Patriot Ledger

PLYMOUTH, MA - Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, sunspots and other celestial wonders are about to be brought a bit closer to Plymouth.

That's because, thanks to two foundations, a robotic observatory will be installed on the roof of the Plymouth Community Intermediate School.

The \$35,000 observatory will house two telescopes - one 8 inches and the other 4 inches - both of which will be remotely controlled from the school's planetarium.

The gift, from the Science Technology Partnership Foundation and the Sheehan Foundation, was enthusiastically accepted by the Plymouth School Committee at its meeting Monday night.

"We're very excited about the observatory," committee Chairwoman Linda McAlduff said Tuesday. "It's going to be electronically connected to all our schools, allowing images of planets, sunspots and other objects to be seen by students throughout the district. It will give students a chance to see an eclipse broadcast live across the district."

Plymouth residents Carl Fletcher and David Buckman, along with Martina Arndt, chairwoman of the astrophysics department at Bridgewater State College, founded the nonprofit science foundation about three years ago. It is dedicated to supporting and supplementing science and technology in Plymouth schools.

Fletcher said his group is passionate about astronomy and the observatory project will enhance the intermediate school's planetarium program.

"The larger telescope will be used for night viewing of the larger, brighter planets," Fletcher said. "The smaller scope will be for daytime viewing. Students will be able to see sunspots, Jupiter, Venus and the rings of Saturn."

(Continued on page 10)

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DR. FRED C. HESS — 1920-2007

(Continued from page 2)

"Just tell a story." And under the stars, Fred was a masterful storyteller!

At Christmastime, for instance, he would describe Orion not as a mighty hunter, but as a ". . . large package in the sky, tied with a pretty bow across the middle."

Or, he might tell the story about the night assistant at Sicily's Palermo Observatory, who quietly entered two strange star names into the observatory's star catalogue in 1814; it wasn't until many years later that it was realized that in actuality, those two odd names were the first and last names of that same night assistant – spelled backwards! So Fred chose two adjacent stars, designating one "Derf" – Fred spelled backwards – while he named the other for his good friend, astrophotographer, Robert Little: "Bob" – that's Bob spelled backwards.

Then there was the one about the constellation Lyra, the Lyre, with Fred explaining that a Lyre was a smaller version of a harp; musical instruments that hundreds of years ago were strummed by young men who would court dewy-eyed young ladies under the cover of darkness. Fred would then say that, believe it or not, this custom was still being practiced today. Using a homonym for his final word, he always got a huge pop from his audience by stating that: "I'm sure that even as I speak to all of you tonight, that at this very moment, there, are countless young ladies out there, listening to liars."

Another amazing ability that Fred had, was to be able to take a subject and make it understandable for all ages. Once, back in the late 1970s, I was in attendance at a lecture that Fred gave at the famous Mohonk Mountain House. His topic was the eclipse saros cycle. About ten minutes into his slide talk, who walked into the room and sat down to listen, but the famous comedian and actor, Jerry Stiller. As Fred continued to expound on the mechanics of eclipse prediction, I periodically looked back at Mr. Stiller who appeared absolutely spellbound by Fred's presentation. When Fred had finished, Mr. Stiller came right up to him and said that if viewing an eclipse of the Sun was half as good as Fred's slide talk, it probably would be a great thing to try and see. What a complement!

Indeed, talking about eclipses of the Sun was perhaps Fred's forte. He traveled around the world, to 18 of them, accumulating more than half an hour, as he would put it, "basking in the shadow of the Moon."

On another occasion, in 1983, Fred was conducting a class for a group of 6 to 8-year olds in one of the basement classrooms of the old Hayden facility. It was a Saturday morning affair, commemorating the annual family Astronomy Day. I was there to help conduct outdoor solar observing in front of the Planetarium, but I made it a point to run downstairs to say hello to Fred amidst a group of about 20 kids, running in twenty different directions while making a noise somewhat similar to a squeal amplified about 20 times. Through the din I asked Fred what he planned to talk about, thinking that it might be something elementary along the lines of "What is the Moon?" or "How to find the North Star." "No," he said, "I'm going to talk to them about the Hertzsprung-Russell Diagram." For a moment, I thought he was pulling my leg, but no, that's absolutely was what his topic was going to be about. I left that room quickly, thinking to myself that Fred had finally bitten off more than he could chew and that he would soon be completely overwhelmed in that room of urchins.

About a half hour later, I decided to run back downstairs and see how Fred was making out. I was certain he was going to need someone to help bail him out and I would be the one to come to his rescue. Except . . . when I got back to the classroom, every child was sitting down in rapt attention as Fred was bringing the class to a close. He was asking them what color a cool star would be and every kid enthusiastically shouted back: RED! He then asked what color a hot star would be and 20 voices yelled back: BLUE! He had those kids eating out of his hand and just before he dismissed the group, every kid in that room gave him a hardy round of applause. Twenty more disciples.

It was at that moment I shook my head and swore that I would never, ever doubt Fred again; as someone recently stated: "He was one who could converse with a child in one breath and Einstein in the next."

This is perhaps the greatest tragedy of this wonderful man's passing: That so many young people, astronomy neophytes and budding young amateur astronomers will never have the opportunity to hear Fred's booming voice. Fortunately, over the years I accumulated a small collection of audio tapes made from lectures, planetarium shows, as

(Continued on page 10)

MEMBER NEWS

(Continued from page 8)

Eventually, the images will be available to the public electronically, Fletcher said.

The two nonprofit foundations will pay for the equipment and its installation and maintenance, and for computer hardware and software for operating the observatory, McAlduff said.

"It will be an additional attraction to our planetarium program," she said.

Other school districts pay a fee to visit Plymouth's planetarium for science field trips, McAlduff said.

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(Continued from page 9) **FRED HESS**

well as interviews that I conducted with Fred for radio broadcasts.

One such tape that I just finished listening to was a recording of a half-hour program that aired on WPAT radio back in 1985, about Halley's Comet. During that interview, the moderator asked Fred about how to correctly pronounce the comet's name: Is it Hail-lee or Hal-lee? Fred pointed out that the latter is the proper pronunciation, adding that "Hail-lee is probably derived from a certain musical group and a wonderful song-and-dance man (Jack Hailey) who played the Tin Man in The Wizard of Oz."

And amazingly, as I listened to Fred utter those words from over two-decades ago, I immediately thought of that part of the movie where the Tin Man receives that ridiculous, albeit beautiful, heart-shaped clock. Like me, you've probably seen it dozens of times in your life. But in thinking about it more, I also realized that what the Wizard said to the Tin Man, probably best sums up the life of Fred Hess:

*"And remember, my sentimental friend,
that a heart is measured not by how much you love,
but by how much you are loved by others."*

So true! He gave so much of himself and enjoyed sharing his knowledge of astronomy with people of all ages. He will be sorely missed.

In This Issue...

Elections

Bylaws

Member News



Constellation
c/o Kevin Conod
The Newark Museum's
Dreyfuss Planetarium
49 Washington Street
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