

Space: The Final Frontier

LOCAL SPACE SOCIETY CHAPTER STRIVES TO EDUCATE AND INSPIRE

Long before the Apollo 11 mission to the moon, man has always wondered what was beyond the Earth's atmosphere and even our own galaxy. Our curiosity led us to create special programs to explore and learn more about the endless void that surrounds our planet. Over the centuries general interest in space has waned and heightened, but there are still enthusiasts that support the idea of expanding the frontier of man. One such group of supporters, the National Space Society, believes in the importance of passing



A model of the solar system serves as a teaching aid.

the knowledge and curiosity of space on to youngsters.

The organization's main goal is to make the United States a space-faring country and to reignite the interest in space exploration by conducting outreach programs and pushing the space agenda. The Tampa chapter He-3, in particular, began about five years ago due to the Columbia tragedy. The group began by doing volunteer work and giving presentations at local public schools.

Eventually, He-3 was ready to give their first Space Day event. However, schools denied the program. So, society President, Jason Rhian,

and Co. contacted Bruton Memorial Library in Plant City and was allowed to use the premises for the event. The first year the event was held supplies were donated by the Kennedy Space Center and had an attendance of about 80 people. The second year, that number skyrocketed to 300. Last year, Wal-Mart joined the list of patrons and the event was decked out with displays, videos, and guest speakers. It was even promoted on radio as well as on T.V. This year, Wal-Mart, NASA, To Be Determined Films, and many other sponsors will be supplying the materials needed to make this year's Space Day a success.

This year's Space Day will include numerous activities to keep the participants busy. Contests, such as Jeopardy In Space, will present a little friendly competition throughout the day. There will also be many scientific experiments, including building your own rocket, which is sure to be a favorite for the kids. There will be a new feature this year as well. A computer program called Lunarnautics

allows the user to fully plan his or her very own space mission from building the shuttle, right down to designing the mission patch. Another treat this year will be the guest appearances of Russell Romanella, the Spacecraft/Space Station Payload Directorate at NASA and Joe Palaia of the Mars Base of Research company 4Frontiers. Mr. Romanella will be discussing the NASA's plan to return to the Moon, as well as the hope to eventually reach Mars and beyond. Mr. Palaia will be discussing the possibilities of eventually establishing a colony on Mars' surface.

Like in previous years, Space Day 4 will be held at the Bruton Memorial Library on May 10. The event will last all day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Attendance is free and drinks and snacks will be provided. There will also be a grand prize giveaway of a maximum access pass to the Kennedy Space Center for an entire family as well as other prizes. So bring out the entire family for a fun-filled day of space exploration.



Participants learn through the use of computer programs.