Galaxy Gala

The Ruth Patrick Science Education Center and DuPont Planetarium hosted the second annual Galaxy Gala event on Thursday, November 29, 2007. The Galaxy Gala was sponsored by RE Phelon, Trolley Run Station, Bechtel, and Wackenhut in partnership with the Aiken Standard.

The “out of this world” event featured live entertainment, heavy hors d’oeuvres, open bar, planetarium presentations and a special appearance by the Galaxy Gals.

Guests could become Galactic Guardians for 2008 by adopting celestial objects during the evening’s silent auction. Guests also had the opportunity to bid on various items such as a private show for up to 45 guests at the DuPont planetarium or a catered dinner for four under the stars. Proceeds from the auction go into an endowment for the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center to support its programs and activities in our local schools.

Galaxy Gala Scavenger Hunt

In conjunction with the Galaxy Gala event, the RPSEC sponsored a scavenger hunt. Eleven signs representing well-known celestial objects in our solar system were strategically placed in front of businesses around town. Clues were published in the Aiken Standard and on the RPSEC website over a period of two weeks. Readers who were able to find all eleven celestial objects were entered to win two free tickets (valued at $70) to the Galaxy Gala event. This year’s winner was Ann Robinson. Thank you to the following businesses for their participation in the Scavenger Hunt.

Cold Creek Nursery
Dippin’ Dots
J. Flanigan’s
Satcher Ford Lincoln Mercury
New Moon Café
Sutton Marine

Ark Animal Hospital
Floyd & Green Jewelers
Sunsation Tanning Salon
Aiken Airport
Town Creek Hair Salon & Spa
Aunt Pitty Pat’s (Holley Building)
**Winter Public Show Schedule**

**December 7, 8, 19**  
7:00 & 8:00 pm – Tis the Season  

**December 1 – Early Bird Special**  
4:00 & 5:00 pm – Tis the Season  

**December 21, 22, 26, 28, 29**  
6:00, 7:00, & 8:00 pm – Tis the Season  

**January 4, 5, 18, 19**  
7:00 pm - Larry Cat in Space  
8:00 pm – Dark Shadows  

**January 5 – Early Bird Special**  
4:00 pm - Larry Cat in Space  
5:00 pm – Dark Shadows  

**February 1, 2, 15, 16**  
7:00 & 8:00 pm – Follow the Drinking Guard  

**February 2 – Early Bird Special**  
4:00 & 5:00 pm - Follow the Drinking Guard  

**March 7, 8, 21, 22**  
7:00 pm - Mission to Mars  
8:00 pm – Journey into the Living Cell  

**March 8 – Early Bird Special**  
4:00 pm - Mission to Mars  
5:00 pm – Journey into the Living Cell  

**April 4, 5, 18, 19**  
7:00 pm - In My Backyard  
8:00 pm – Cruising Through the Constellations  

**April 5 – Early Bird Special**  
4:00 pm - In My Backyard  
5:00 pm – Cruising Through the Constellations  

**Ticket Pricing**  
General Shows:  
Adults $4.50, Seniors $3.50, Students 4K-12 grade $2.50  

Early Bird Special  
Adults $3.50, Seniors $2.50, Students 4K-12 grade $1.50  

**For More Information Visit:**  
http://rpsec.usca.edu/planetarium/  

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**DuPont Planetarium Wedding!**  

On October 27, 2007, Cathe-rine and Igna-cio Petro be-came the first couple mar-ried in the DuPont Plan-etarium. The bride and groom ex-changed vows un-der the planetarium stars, then proceeded to the roof of the science center where they and their guests sipped wine under the real stars. The wedding party and guests viewed the heavens through the Bechtel Telescope, which was manned by Dr. Gary Senn dressed in his tuxedo and starry bowtie. Cam-pus dining served tasty food for the reception near the pendulum, and delicious wedding cake was consumed in the planetarium waiting area. Friends decorated the entrance to the building with a white runner and lovely luminaries, and God decorated the sky with a fabulous sunset as time for the wedding approached. It was tru-ly a memorable evening! Dr. Senn and Darlene Smal-ley enjoyed celebrating with the newlyweds and wish them many years of wedded bliss.  

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**‘Tis the Season**  

December 1 – Early Bird Special at 4:00 & 5:00 p.m.  
December 7, 8, 19 at 7:00 & 8:00 p.m.  
December 21, 22, 26, 28, 29 at 6:00, 7:00 & 8:00 p.m.  

Join us for a delightful show about the season that holds some of the warmest and brightest celebrations of the year. ‘Tis the Season traces the development of many endearing holiday cus-toms and how they light up our lives during the darkest time of the year. The show explains the science behind the winter sol-stice and Earth’s seasons, and it explores some possible astro-nomical explanations for the Star of Bethlehem. ‘Tis the Season is one of our most popular, longest running shows. Many fami-lies come back year after year to rediscover the Christmas spirit through this holiday tradition. Make your reservations soon!
NEW! Adopt an Animal Program

The Ruth Patrick Science Education Center is looking for sponsors to help support the cost of feeding and caring for the animals used in our K-12 educational programs. An animal may be adopted by an individual, a business, or a group such as an elementary school class or a scout troop. The sponsors’ names will be displayed on the animals’ cages for one school year. Donations are tax deductible; sponsorship opportunities for 2007-2008 are listed below. For more information, please contact Deborah McMurtrie at DeborahMc@usca.edu or 803-641-2834.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIRDS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red-Tailed Hawk (Buteo jamaicensis) Non-releasable male, born 1992 (Windsor)</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barred Owl (Strix varia) Non-releasable male, born 1998 (Spencer)</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
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<tr>
<th>REPTILES: CROCODILIANS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis) female, born 2003 (Miss Sippi)</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis) female, born 2006 (Georgia)</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis) male, born 2006 (Louie)</td>
<td>$750</td>
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<tr>
<th>REPTILES: SNAKES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Kingsnake (Lampropeltis getula getula)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Pine Snake (Pituophis melanoleucus melanoleucus)</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grey Rat Snake (Elaphe obsoleta spiloides)</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albino Yellow Rat Snake (Elaphe obsoleta quadriovittata)</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Yellow Rat Snake (Elaphe obsoleta quadriovittata)</td>
<td>$250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corn Snake (Elaphe guttata)</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPTILES: TURTLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box Turtle (Terrapene carolina carolina)</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snapping Turtle (Chelydra serpentina)</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painted Turtle (Chrysemys picta picta)</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicken Turtle (Deirochelys reticularia)</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-Eared Slider Turtle (Trachemys scripta elegans)</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow-Bellied Slider Turtle (Trachemys scripta scripta)</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<th>AMPHIBIANS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barking Tree Frog (Hyla gratiosa)</td>
<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Tree Frog (Hyla cinerea)</td>
<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gray Tree Frog (Hyla versicolora)</td>
<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Leopard Frog (Rana uralicia)</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull Frog (Rana catesbeiana)</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Toad (Bufo terrestris)</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Salamander (Ambystoma maculatum)</td>
<td>$50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marbled Salamander (Ambystoma opacum)</td>
<td>$50</td>
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Class Adopts Red-Eared Slider Turtle

Mrs. Carmen Downs’ class at Jefferson Elementary School recently “adopted” an animal at the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center. The children chose to adopt a female red-eared slider turtle for the 2007-2008 school year, which they named “Miss Scarlett O’Slider.”

Deborah McMurtrie, director of student programs at the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, visited the students’ classroom with three aquatic turtles. The class voted on the turtle they wanted to sponsor, and presented a gift of $119.40 to help support the cost of feeding and caring for this animal all year. Some of the children even donated their ice cream money!

The sponsor’s names and photo will continue to be displayed on the turtle tank at the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center for the remainder of the school year.

Class Adopts Corny the Corn Snake

The students of Darya McMurtrie’s 5K class are participating in the Center’s new “Adopt-An-Animal” program. They are providing funds for the feeding and care of Corny the corn snake over the rest of the school year.

The kids raised the money to adopt Corny themselves through bake sales and chores. Corny got his name through a majority vote of the students and even a few visitors.

“I heard about the program and thought it would be a great thing for our class,” Mrs. McMurtrie said. “We will visit the Ruth Patrick Center four times for special activities this year, and we’ll go by to visit Corny.”

“Aiken Preparatory School has been extremely supportive of the Ruth Patrick Science Center’s programs for many years,” Student Programs Director Deborah McMurtrie said.
Making It Happen

Dr. Cheryl Wissick from USC Columbia is one of the program faculty members in the USC Aiken/Columbia Master of Education in Educational Technology program. Dr. Wissick was awarded the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) Making it Happen Award by the South Carolina Association of Educational Technology (SCAET) at the annual EdTech Conference on October 27, 2007. Making it Happen is an internationally recognized awards program for educators in the field of educational technology integration in K-12 schools. The program identifies and rewards educational technology leaders around the world for their commitment and innovation. Recipients of the awards are educators who:

1. Apply available technology now
2. Move forward and don’t look back
3. See students as real people
4. Teach through relationships, inspiring, encouraging, nurturing
5. Recognize that further change is necessary, but understand that it is a process
6. Realize that teacher empowerment is the key element to technology integration
7. Expect success
8. Motivate through awareness and access to information

Since its inception, the program has grown into an internationally recognized awards program highlighting the dramatic role various educators, from the Secretary of Education to the classroom teacher, play in the learning process using high quality technology in the classroom. Designed for educators, the program identifies educational technology leaders around the world and rewards those individuals for their commitment and innovation. Since the program’s inception in 1995, more than 300 pink jackets for women and black jackets for men have been awarded to outstanding educational leaders!

STEP Takes New Steps

Anne Bohnet has been the director of the Science and Technology Enrichment Program (STEP) for the past two years. Before that, she was an instructor for STEP’s predecessor, the Natural Resources, Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Education Program (NRSMEEP). In October, Anne began a new position with the SC Forest Commission at Harbison Environmental Education Forest in Columbia. Anne was an important asset to the RPSEC and will be sorely missed. We are delighted that Anne still participated in the Galaxy Gala on November 29, 2007.

STEP will take new “steps” under the leadership of its new director, Tara Jenkins. Tara comes to us from Sego Middle School in Augusta, GA where she was a science teacher for five years. Most recently, she served as the teacher leader, known as the Teacher-in-Residence, for Sego’s science department. We look forward to great things from Tara.

You may contact Tara at TaraJ@usca.edu.

Savannah River Regional Science and Engineering Fair

The CSRA Science and Engineering Fair is back! Thanks to a partnership between Washington Savannah River Company, the University of South Carolina Aiken, the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center and the SC Academy of Science; schools in Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, Edgefield, Bamberg, Saluda, McCormick and Hampton counties in South Carolina and Richmond and Columbia Counties in Georgia are invited to send their first place winning projects to the 2008 CSRA Regional Science and Engineering Fair that will be held at the University of South Carolina Aiken on March 15, 2008. The fair will be open to all 4th through 12th graders in CSRA public, private and home schools. To register for the CSRA Science and Engineering Fair go to http://educationoutreach.srs.gov/srrsef.htm and scroll down to “School Fair On-Line Registration Form.” For additional information contact Bonnie Maxwell at bonnie.maxwell@srs.gov or 803-952-8720.
Masters Degree in Educational Technology
Program Moving to On-line format

The Educational Technology program at the University of South Carolina Aiken (USCA) and the University of South Carolina (USC) Columbia is accepting applications for enrollment. There has been interest in moving the program to an on-line format and this process is well underway. For more information visit: http://edtech.usca.edu/.

The focus of the program is to develop capabilities essential to the effective design, evaluation, and delivery of technology-based instruction and training (e.g., software development, multimedia development, assistive technology modifications, web-based development, and distance learning) in order to (1) prepare educators to assume leadership roles in the integration of educational technology into the school curriculum, and (2) to provide graduate-level instructional opportunities for several populations (e.g., classroom teachers, corporate trainers, educational software developers) that need to acquire both technological competencies and understanding of sound instructional design principles and techniques.

Anyone interested in enrolling in this program should contact Karen Morris at 803-641-3489.

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Educational Technology Student Earns Award

The South Carolina Association for Educational Technology (SCAET) recently recognized Cross Roads Middle School in District 5 of Richland and Lexington Counties at the annual SC Educational Technology Conference (Ed Tech 2007) held in Myrtle Beach, October 24-26. Chris Craft, a student in the USC Aiken/Columbia Master of Education in Educational Technology program is a teacher at Cross Roads Middle School and implemented the project that won a Technology Innovative Program (TIP) award.

The following is a short summary of the winning TIP award: “In Spanish class at Cross Roads Middle School, students are offered the chance to work with podcasting, wikis, CPS Remotes, Moodle, and more! The entire design of the course has technology infused at every turn. Students are offered the chance to collaborate internationally with classes in Spanish-speaking countries and beyond! Students are also given the chance to view slide presentations, take online quizzes, and add links to a class wiki from home using a variety of tools. We also do group projects with Microsoft Photo Story, Audacity, Google Earth and other programs.”

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Foundational Core Courses (6 hours)
AERM/EDRM 700 – Introduction to Research in Education
AEET/EDET 709 – Applications of Learning Principles

Design Courses (15 hours)
AEET/EDET 603 – Design and Development Tools I
AEET/EDET 703 – Design and Development Tools II
AEET/EDET 722 – Instructional Design and Assessment
AEET/EDET 755 – Design and Evaluation of Information Access and Delivery
AEET/EDET 793 – Advanced Instructional Design and Development

Technology Core Courses (12 hours)
AEET/EDET 650 – Internship in Educational Technology
AEET/EDET 735 – Technological Applications for Diverse Populations
AEET/EDET 746 – Management of Technology Resources
AEET/EDET 780 – Seminar in Educational Technology

Electives (3 hours chosen from the following courses)
AEET/EDET 652 – Design and Evaluation of Games and Simulations
AETE 731 – Instructional and Informational Applications of Technology or
EDTE 731 – Integration of Technology and Instruction
SLIS 706 – Introduction to Information Technologies
TSTM 790 – Advanced Study in Technology Support/Training Management

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Dr. Gary Senn Re-elected as DUG President

At the 2007 annual meeting of the International DigiStar Users Group (DUG), Dr. Gary J. Senn was re-elected as president for his third and final term. The Digistar system is a full dome, graphics projection system found in more than 100 planetariums around the world. The DUG is composed of individuals who work with Digistar systems and desire an opportunity to share professional interests with others in the same field. DUG’s main activity is an annual conference that is held at different Digistar locations as determined by the membership. The 2007 meeting was held at the University of Texas at Arlington. For more information about DUG, visit http://www.digistardomes.org/
South Carolina and Georgia Schools Participate in the 2007-2008 South Carolina Regional Future City Competition

The mission of the National Engineers Week Future City Competition is to provide a fun and exciting educational engineering program for seventh and eighth grade students. This program combines a stimulating engineering challenge with a “hands-on” application as students present their vision of a city of the future.

Participating Schools

A. L. Corbett Middle, Wagener, SC
Agape Christian Homeschool, Aiken, SC
Aiken Christian School, Aiken, SC
Aiken Prep, Aiken, SC
Blackville Hilda Junior High, Blackville, SC
Cardinal Newman, Columbia, SC
Evans Middle, Evans, GA
First Baptist Church School, Charleston, SC
Hickory Tavern Middle, Gray Court, SC
JET Middle, Johnston, SC
Kelly Mill Middle, Blythwood, SC
Kennedy Middle, Aiken, SC
Langford Middle, Augusta, GA
League Academy, Greenville, SC
Mead Hall, Aiken, SC
Midland Valley Preparatory, Graniteville, SC
New Ellenton Middle, New Ellenton, SC
North Augusta Middle, North Augusta, SC
Our Lady of Peace School, North Augusta, SC
Palmetto Middle, Mullins, SC
Paul Knox Middle, North Augusta, SC
RSM Middle, Ridge Spring, SC
Sego Middle, Augusta, GA
Warren County Middle, Warrenton, GA

The SC Regional Future City Competition is sponsored by the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center and Washington Savannah River Company. For more information visit http://futurecity.org/

Central Savannah River Area Mathematics and Science Regional Center

The ultimate goal of the MSU Coaching Initiative is to improve instruction in K-8 Mathematics and Science. Coaches work to improve instructional practices of teachers in the context of the teacher’s own classroom.

*Coach applications are available online at www.myscmsu.org.*
Contact your principal or district contact person for more information. The coach applications are due on January 11, 2008.

The current coaches for the Central Savannah River Area are:

Jackie Bearden - Barnwell - Mathematics - Year 2
Alison Campbell Brown – Williston-Elko – iCoach – Year 1
Deloris Childs – North Aiken – Mathematics – Year 1
Sally Fickling – Williston – Science – Year 2
Doris Frederick – Fairfax – Science – Year 2
Catherine Hamilton – Redcliffe – Science – Year 1
Dorothy Kennedy – Allendale – Science – Year 2
Christine Snider – Macedonia – Science – Year 1
Kathryn Storey - Leavelle McCampbell - iCoach – Year 1
Tammy Swartz – Wagener – Mathematics - Year 3
Rachel Wall – Williston - Mathematics – Year 3
Wanda Wates – Edgefield – Science – Year 2

South Carolina Algebra Project

Schools supported by the CSRA MSRC

The goal of the South Carolina Algebra Project is to increase student achievement in mathematics by increasing the capacity of teachers to use effective instructional strategies, to use their understanding of what students know to modify and make instructional decisions and to continuously reflect on their practice.

Current South Carolina Algebra Project Schools supported by CSRA MSRC are:

Amy McClain - Jackson Middle
Grace Ellison – Laurens High
Kitty Stone – Laurens High
Renee Johnson – New Ellenton Middle
Richard McCormick – Silver Bluff
Mary Thomas – Silver Bluff
Over 2200 Attend SEED

The 22nd Annual (SEED) Science Education Enrichment Day offered the community over 65 science and mathematics related exhibits and activities hosted by business, industry and school organizations. Visitors had the chance to make their own paper, race robots, build straw towers, make slime, learn about the weather, view their house from satellite images and much more. Students also had the chance to test their skills with SEED Trivia, completing math puzzles and exploring other thought-provoking exhibits. This year’s theme “I Love Science” was certainly brought to life by the many community volunteers that made this event so successful. Over 2200 people attended this year’s SEED.

Spirit of Ruth Patrick Award

For several years, science teacher Helen Campbell has entered teams from Paul Knox Middle School in the National Engineers’ Week Future City regional competition at USC Aiken.

Campbell’s commitment to the Future City program and to the teaching profession has earned her the second Spirit of Ruth Patrick Award. Dr. Gary Senn presented Campbell with a plaque at an Aiken County Board of Education meeting.

“We were delighted when Helen’s all girl team won the 2006 SC Regional Future City Competition and could go to the nationals,” Senn said. “It’s wonderful to have girls interested in science and engineering and bridge the gender gap. The Spirit of Ruth Patrick Award is a great way to recognize the wonderful job that the teachers do.”

In 1986 the center was named for Patrick, a world renowned scientist who developed a way to test the water quality of the Savannah River while the Savannah River Site was built in the early 1950s. Now 100, Patrick remains active as a staff member of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

Robert E. Alexander Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award

Alexia Clamp, Williamston Elko District 29 Superintendent, was awarded the Robert E. Alexander Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award from the University of South Carolina Aiken and the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center. This is the sixth year this award has been presented to an administrator in the CSRA. The prestigious award recognizes individuals for their efforts and support of bringing full awareness to math and science education, and using the resources of the RPSEC to help meet science and math standards. Recipients of the award are also individuals who encourage teachers to work with the RPSEC to develop skills needed for science and math instruction.

FREE Teacher Resources and Visiting Scientists Available

The Traveling Science and Mathematics Demonstrations Program has over 300 science and math kits available for use in the classroom. Supplement your curriculum with nationally recognized and state adopted exemplary materials. Kits have been correlated to SC state standards. Many kits contain children’s literature so that you can integrate your science and language arts lessons.

In addition to these resources, you can request a visiting (STRAND) Scientists with Traveling Resources and Neat Demonstrations volunteer for classroom presentations. For more information, please visit http://rpsec.usca.edu/travelingscience/ or call us at 803-641-3683.
The Ruth Patrick Science Education Center Newsletter is a publication of the RPSEC for our patrons. The RPSEC encompasses the CSRA Mathematics and Science Regional Center (MSRC), Center of Excellence in Educational Technology (CEET), DuPont Planetarium, RPSEC Student Programs, Traveling Science and Mathematics Demonstrations Program (TSMDP), and the Science and Technology Enrichment Program (STEP). If you have any information that would be beneficial to the audience of this newsletter, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact John Hutchens, Editor, at 803-641-3474 or via email to johnh@usca.edu. Deadline for submission in the next newsletter is March 7, 2007.