THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 INNOVATION CELEBRATION GALA SUPPORTERS!

Our annual Innovation Celebration gala on Friday, September 13 was an incredible success, raising more than $246,000 for the RMSC! We’re proud to say that this was the most successful Innovation Celebration since it began in 2012 to celebrate the RMSC’s centennial. This year’s themed event, Reflections of the Future, drew a record breaking crowd of supporters who embodied the innovative spirit we were celebrating, wearing their best and brightest, and experiencing a kaleidoscope of exhilarating explosions, live music, and colorful fun!

Support from Innovation Celebration allows the RMSC to continue providing unique experiences, inspiring young minds and serving as the community’s place to gather, make discoveries and ignite a passion for lifelong learning. As a result of this fantastic event, more school-aged children will learn about science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through hands on exhibits and programs. Thank you to all who provided support, especially our committee co-chairs, Alexis & Darren Vogt and Jim & Liz Sydor, for their tremendous leadership.

JOIN US FOR THESE EXCITING UPCOMING EVENTS!

January 24th RMSC After Dark: Clue’d In: The game is afoot at the Rochester Museum & Science Center and a murder must be solved! Don your most dapper detective hat and join us for a live action version of everyone’s favorite murder mystery board game. Assemble your crime solving team (up to 6 people) or make it a date night for a killer evening of mystery certain to take you on a wild case throughout the RMSC.

February 28th RMSC STEM Awards: Join us at the Strathallan Hotel as we honor the bright minds of our area’s educators and organizations that are making a difference and exciting people about opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

March 7th Uncorked & On Tap: Celebrate all things food and fermentation with a night of sampling local food and drink. Make sure to stay for informative seminars detailing the science behind food and beverage tasting, viticulture, distilling, and more! It’s the perfect pairing of science, fun, and fundraising with the RMSC!

May 1st RMSC After Dark: Geek Chic Prom: Geek ing out never looked so chic! Dust off that puffy sleeved prom dress, oversized bowtie and bust out your most awkward dance moves. We’ll spike the punch so start practicing your perfect prom pose now!

Visit www.rmsc.org for more information about each of our events and how to purchase tickets.
DEAR FRIENDS,

Has it been a year already? While it seems like I started yesterday, I’m now entering my second year at RMSC. It went by fast and we’ve done so much!

In January, we opened the renovated Strasenburgh Planetarium to rave reviews; the new digital projection system can do so much and we’ve spent a good part of 2019 discovering its enormous capabilities. We’ve brought back laser shows and giant screen films, and added new programs like Gaming on the Dome.

We celebrated Animal Week, Messtival, NordicFest, Maple Sugaring, Superhero Science, and Haudenosaunee Days together. RMSC hosted dynamic lectures on sound, de-extinction, and the science of addiction. We invited adults to attend our kid-free After Dark events. We welcomed more children than ever before to attend our summer and break-week Curiosity Camps. We closed out our internally developed SoundSense exhibit and opened the immensely popular SciFItch exhibit that visitors spend hours at a time exploring and engaging with.

We opened our doors to 43,265 school children visiting on field trips, learning about the universe, pond life, climate change, geology, Native American heritage, weather, local habitats, Rochester history, physics, the Earth, and so much more. We welcomed a new class of preschoolers to the award winning RMSC preschool, and doubled our offerings for Forest School at the Cumming Nature Center. We even started planning for the 2024 total solar eclipse, when Rochester will sit in the line of totality!

We doubled down on our commitment to diversity and inclusion, developing the Objectively Racist (2nd floor) exhibition with community partners, and planning for a 2020 exhibition on local women who changed our world. We worked with local Haudenosaunee artisans, elders and storytellers to present first-person programming for our visitors, and continue to welcome diverse perspectives, voices, and expertise in all we do.

My biggest accomplishment this year? I learned. I learned the rhythms of the museum and of the community we proudly serve. I learned the power of this place and what it means to our guests. I learned that RMSC has an outstanding staff and world class volunteer corps who make it all possible. I learned that we are so much more than the sum of our parts; the Science Center, the Nature Center, the Local, Cultural, and Natural History Museum, the Planetarium, the Preschool, the collection, the library, the exhibits and the programs. I learned that RMSC is an integral part of the fabric of the community.

And I learned that we can’t do any of it without you.

Gratefully,

Hillary Olson, President & CEO

ONE IN A MILLION – THEN AND NOW

It was typical summer Friday evening in June 1973 when Sonia Socha’s sister suggested that she and her friend attend a show at the Strasenburgh Planetarium. Sonia had been on the boat all day and wasn’t confident that she would make the 8pm show. Nevertheless, Sonia and her friend quickly readied themselves and headed into town. They were, indeed, late, but something was different at the Planetarium on this particular night. As Sonia approached the building, there were crowds of people waiting in line and news crews on site. They were anxiously awaiting the one millionth customer to arrive – and arrive she did! A very surprised Sonia was welcomed by the Planetarium Director at the time, Don Hall, as well as Edwin and Clara Strasenburgh, for whom the Planetarium is named. Sonia was presented with a lifetime membership to the RMSCO and has been viewed as somewhat of a local celebrity to her family and friends ever since. “It was a thrill to meet the Strasenburghs,” recalls Sonia. “They were very passionate about the Planetarium and so gracious.” The experience formed a life-long attachment to the RMSC not only for Sonia, but also for her family and friends.

Now, more than 50 years after its opening, the Strasenburgh Planetarium has received a transformational facelift that, according to Sonia, “has a different meaning today than it did back then.” Sonia has kept in touch with Don Hall for several years and makes it a point to visit the Planetarium every time she is in the Rochester area. When Sonia learned of the Strasenburgh Planetarium’s reopening celebration taking place this past January, she rescheduled her personal affairs to ensure that she could attend. To her pleasant surprise, Don Hall was also in attendance and the two connected for the first time in several years. Don greeted Sonia with a warm hello and said what he always used to say to her: “I knew you would not abuse the use of the pass!”

The evening of June 15, 1973, and her times at the Strasenburgh Planetarium will forever be cherished memories for Sonia. She looks forward to continuing to share the importance of the Strasenburgh Planetarium with people she encounters.

“In addition to the great family memories of my Aunt Sonia being the ‘one millionth customer’ at the Planetarium, as an elementary school teacher I have shared the story every year with my new students. While telling them how great it is to be able to go to the Planetarium so often with family and friends, I hope that they go home and convince their parents to take them. It is such an awesome place! Maybe my Aunt Sonia can convince them to offer a free field trip for my 4th grade class?”

-Brett Zeller, Sonia’s nephew

Sonia Socha, Don Hall, and Edward Strasenburgh in 1973; Sonia Socha and Don Hall at the Planetarium reopening event in 2019.
THE STRASENBURGH PLANETARIUM - A YEAR IN REVIEW

More than 50 years after its opening, the Strasenburgh Planetarium is once again at the forefront of technology. The newly renovated Planetarium reopened in January 2019 and has been wowing visitors of all ages. The centerpiece of the renovated Strasenburgh Planetarium is its new state-of-the-art Digistar 6 full-dome projection system featuring unprecedented clarity and breathtaking images. Guests enjoy imagery projected by special hemispherical lenses made by Rochester-based optics manufacturer Navitar, Inc. Additional Star Theater renovations include new carpeting and wall covering, wider aisles, a flexible seating plan with new chairs, colorful new lighting created by a ring of programmable LED dome lighting, and an upgraded sound system.

Our January 2019 opening show, Outer Space to Inner Space, lifted us above the Rochester landscape, out to the Orion Nebula, and back to Earth in time for the 2024 solar eclipse. Monthly Stars with Carl shows continue to feature our original 1968 Zeiss star projector as the main attraction. The Beatles led the return of Saturday night laser shows and the beloved children’s shows I See the Sky and Planet Spectacular returned with updates. School field trip groups saw Rotation and Revolution in a physically intuitive visualization that’s light-years ahead of anything we could do before. A Day on Pluto took us around Pluto (with up-to-date surface features) to view its strange cycles of day, month, and year. The Eagle Has Landed placed us inside the Apollo 11 lunar module in the minutes of final descent with an accurate view out of the window and National Parks Adventure looked even more beautiful in the new digital medium. Our fall homeschool astronomy course drew the largest enrollment yet.

Mid-renovation, Winter 2018; the newly renovated Strasenburgh Planetarium.

In 2020, look for previews of beautiful planet arrangements in the sky, black holes, exoplanets, a new sleepovers…to name a few.

Fringe Festival, video game nights, the Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster’s annual meeting, and children’s and graduation celebrations, several weddings, a cutting-edge dance-music-video performance as part of the a new food and beverage service bar. This past year we have hosted a trade show for food distributors, birthday

THE FICTION THAT HAS BECOME OUR FUTURE

"Science fiction is any idea that occurs in the head and doesn’t exist yet, but soon will, and will change everything for everybody, and nothing will ever be the same again." – Ray Bradbury

From robots to smart phones to self-driving vehicles, the scientists and engineers creating the technologies of today and tomorrow are being inspired by the words and images of science fiction. The RMSC’s newest exhibition, SciFiTech, celebrates popular culture’s ever-changing impact on technology in a fusion of science fiction and science fact with a fun blend of iconic objects and engaging interactives within immersive environments.

At 8,000 square feet, SciFiTech is one of the largest exhibitions ever hosted by the RMSC. Not only is it expansive, but many of the individual pieces are so large they would not fit through some of the 3rd floor doorways. What was the solution? Make them fly, of course! This wasn’t your typical crane job though. Working with some of the exhibition’s creators from Stage Nine as well as Boulter Industrial Contractors, RMSC staff removed a section of windows from the Redman Gallery and craned in such iconic pieces as the DeLorean time machine (with E.T. in the passenger seat, of course) and some well-known droids from a galaxy far, far away.

In addition to interactive elements that include experiencing a virtual world with the Oculus Rift™ and multiple controllable robots, staff from the RMSC’s Collections and Exhibits departments have added elements unique to Rochester, utilizing pieces from the museum’s collections to tell the story of “From Bone to Phone” - how certain technologies have evolved into the device many of us now carry every day.

Fifty years ago this year, the Apollo space missions ignited a generation of scientists and engineers to affect a spike of scientific and technological development across not just the United States, but the world. Today, movies depicting holographic board games, de-extinct dinosaurs and 3D-printed cybernetics are inspiring the science and technology that will impact our reality. The RMSC is excited to bring SciFiTech to our community so that we can ignite that next generation of creators right here!

SciFiTech will be at the RMSC until May 5th, 2020.

"This exhibit represents everything that I stand for in our industry. The height of science fiction movies inspired generations to see a future full of new technology that only the best creative and science minds in the world were imagining. Decades before their actual implementation, artists and engineers were collaborating to depict the future of tech. As a commercial film company, that imagining is part of our job and to pass that education and inspiration on to others should be a pillar of our mission. When we opened our new AR/VR division, we felt it only necessary to carry on that tradition using this new tech to promote the show."

- Aaron Gordon, Founder and CEO of Optic Sky Productions and a supporter of SciFiTech

"Frequently when some of the older generation hear the word technology the mind jumps to eyes glued to cell phones and the inability to have an in-the-moment conversation. This exhibit bridged the generational technology gap and created a platform that enabled everyone to engage and enjoy various aspects of technology. It created a common ground to spark interesting dialogue and provided a great opportunity to learn. What could possibly be better than learning, having a good time, and connecting with old and new friends?"

I decided to support it because I wanted it to be available to our community. I did not expect to become enamored. That was an unexpected bonus. I cannot pick a favorite part because I came with so many different people and I got great joy in watching each one embrace a different piece of the exhibit."

-Dawn Lipson, supporter of SciFiTech

"What could possibly be better than learning, having a good time, and connecting with old and new friends?"

“From Bone to Phone” - how certain technologies have evolved into the device many of us now carry every day.

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-Dawn Lipson, supporter of SciFiTech
Your membership supports the growth and development of the RMCSC and enables us to offer new hands-on, interactive experiences at the Science Museum, present amazing star shows and special events at Strasburgh Planetarium, and provide hours of outdoor recreation at Culminating Nature Center. We thank you!

Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this listing. Please contact the Institutional Advancement Office for any questions or to ensure the accuracy of this listing. Every effort has been made to correct errors.

**Deceased**