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The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is
OPEN DAILY (except Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day)
with FREE GENERAL ADMISSION.
Hours are: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., & Sat. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Wed. from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Sundays & Holidays from 1 to 5 p.m.
The heart of a museum is its collection, those significant and accidental things left behind. Museums come in all shapes and sizes, from art palaces to zoos and everything in between. But all museums serve the same purpose: to collect, to preserve, and to explain things. Whether the objects are ancient sculptures or endangered species, museums save things that matter, and explain why they matter through exhibits and programs.

Kalamazoo Valley Museum saves artifacts—the things that humans have made. Our museum is home to over 45,000 objects, once real parts of people’s lives and now real pieces of the past. Many of the things in our collection were cherished souvenirs or family heirlooms, three-dimensional memories carefully placed in a drawer or kept in a trunk for the future. Others, like the bones of a mastodon uncovered during repairs on Paterson Street in 1927, are accidental survivors of times gone by and moments forgotten. Whether it has survived intentionally or accidentally, each object has a story to tell.

A big yellow taxi made right here in Kalamazoo is one of the most important artifacts in our collection. Checker cabs are significant artifacts because they can be used to tell many stories about the past, both personally and collectively. Their connection to Kalamazoo and their place in our country’s recent history are the reasons why we selected a cartoon Checker as the museum’s new mascot “Artie Fact.” Created by Kalamazoo artist Paul Sizer, Artie is both a symbol of our museum, and an escort to take readers on journeys to discover the many stories our museum holds. Artie symbolizes Kalamazoo’s ties to the world, and connects our present to the past.

We hope Artie will also provide a playful link to help children appreciate the experiences of their parents, grandparents, and all the people and discoveries stretching back in time. And we hope you enjoy our newest venture Museography. We look forward to hearing your responses to this issue, and any suggestions you might have for features you would enjoy seeing in the future.

Patrick Norris, director
Kalamazoo Valley Museum

Paul Sizer, creator of Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s new mascot Artie Fact, is a graphic designer and illustrator who was born, raised and lives in Kalamazoo. Drawing since the age of five, Paul graduated from Western Michigan University with a degree in graphic design, and for the last eight years has worked at WMU, where he teaches graphic design and is production manager for the Design Center in the Department of Art. Paul also runs his own freelance business, Sizer Design + Illustration with a client list including WMU, Kalamazoo College, Stryker, Pharmacia, Gazelle Sports, the Kalamazoo Public Library, and national and international companies. In addition, he lectures and teaches classes in cartooning in local and regional school districts, and is a comic-book artist and writer. His critically praised comic-book series, “Little White Mouse,” is sold all over the world. Visit www.littlewhitemouse.com for more information about Paul’s comic and design work.
Youngsters can engage in the pursuit of Indiana Jones-like adventures while learning valuable life skills at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s current nationally touring exhibition “The Big Adventure.” A creation of The Children’s Museum of Houston in Texas, this series of “para perils” and “pseudo dares” creates challenging, hands-on, multi-sensory, self-paced learning experiences for kids ages 5 through 12. This bilingual exhibition has signs in both English and Spanish.

Under the umbrella concept of “adventure education,” children’s mental and physical abilities are tested as they identify challenges, use tools to solve problems, and gain confidence in making decisions through exciting adventures:

- “Tunnels of Fun” with its winding, darkish trail of dinosaur tracks, shoeprints, ladybugs and tree leaves.
- “Adventure Mountain” and its six-foot wall of rocks to be conquered by way of color-coded handholds, footholds and ropes.
- “Out on a Ledge” with its virtual adventure of being three stories off the ground, moving from building to building on a thin beam, while firefighters wait below to catch those who “fall” because they failed to use their balance and “smarts.”
So was Harvard’s Dr. Howard Gardner and his theory of multiple intelligences, which advocates learning “by doing” and through multi-sensory experiences. Not all children learn in the same ways, nor do they share the same interests.

Also taken into account was the research showing that forms of physical activity can enhance a child’s emotional and physical well-being. As the child develops and masters basic physical skills, confidence is gained as is a willingness for personal challenge and comfort with surroundings.

As a result, the concept of “adventure education” evolved. Its advocates propose that significant learning occurs when chal-

Challenging children to experience new things, identify problems, use available resources, seek new information, set goals, and solve problems in learning how to learn were factors taken into account when designing “The Big Adventure.”

“‘The Big Adventure,’” thus, is not simply a physically challenging experience. The areas are designed to help children make “real-world” connections, no matter what their physical and academic interests and skill levels are.

Through cooperation, exploration, participation and evaluation, those who undertake “The Big Adventure” learn to work together, gain an awareness of differences, develop mutual respect, and build confidence in themselves and in the abilities of others.

“The Big Adventure” was created and is circulated by The Children’s Museum of Houston in collaboration with the Youth Museum Exhibit Collaborative (YMEC). Exhibition dates at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum run through January 20, 2002.
Move over Kalamazoo Central, Portage Central, Battle Creek Central and Hackett Catholic Central, and make room for “Solve It Central.” That’s the companion exhibition at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum to the nationally touring “The Big Adventure” for children 5 through 12. Both provide highly entertaining, highly interactive problem-solving challenges.

“Solve-It Central” was developed by the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum and designed by the Kalamazoo firm of Jeff Bernstein Exhibition Design with National Science Foundation funding. It targets its 16 attractions for family or group participation and focuses on three themes:
(1) Multiple problem-solving strategies;
(2) Math and science as effective tools in implementing problem-solving strategies;
(3) Effective principles for use in social problem-solving.

The 16 computerized, problem-solving stations are titled “911,” “Amazing Pipes,” “Audio Tech,” “Block by Block,” “Crossed Wires,” “Five Alarmer,” “Get the Picture,” “Gone Fishing,” “Measurement Mat,” “Packing/Unpacking,” “Patterns Heard,” “Patterns Seen,” “Solve-It Central Headquarters,” “Switch Yard,” “Take Your Order Cafe,” and “Your Brain on Problems.”

At “Patterns Seen,” participants create and recognize visual patterns, using measures and non-metric classifications to design a room or chart a sidewalk through a park. “Patterns Heard” uses the same approach with meter, tempo and other creative components to write song lyrics and poetry. “Take Your Order Cafe” challenges families to take orders from

Visitors try out video displays and work on problem-solving challenges with the exhibition’s computer stations.
diners and relay those choices to a short-order cook. Moving furniture through the doors and windows of a four-room furnished house to a moving van with a capacity to exactly hold all the pieces is the challenge in “Packing/Unpacking.” In “Amazing Pipes,” participants take on the role of an organ-maker, plumber or steam fitter in properly connecting pipes. “911” replicates the real-life scenarios that emergency medical technicians and public-safety officers encounter daily.

“Gone Fishing” features a tabletop pond, a movable rowboat, and a set of “fish stories.” Participants must take into account such variables as water depth, water temperature, aquatic growth, and other marine characteristics in locating and luring those trophy finny denizens.

“Switch Yard” poses the problem of arranging railroad cars in proper alignment so that blockages at streets and crossings are minimal.

Bernstein got involved in his first science exhibit at Sea World’s aquatic and marine showcase in Orlando in 1972. Since then he’s been working on projects in Singapore, Costa Rica, Hong Kong and Copenhagen, as well as all over the United States from Disneyland to the Smithsonian Institution.

His art and technology have addressed subjects as varied as water, flight, solar energy, marine ecology and wildlife, sports memorabilia, computer science, the Civil Rights Movement, the gold rush in the Klondike, and the promise of the Information Age. And now “Solve-It Central” investigates the brain’s capacity to analyze a situation, conceive strategies, and untangle problems. • • •

*Solve-It Central was developed by the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, with support from the National Science Foundation. Solve-It Central can be seen at the KVM through January 20, 2002.*
What Is It?

Make some guesses about these objects from the KVM Collection. How old do you think they are?
What were they used for?

#1 This object was used to repair an item of clothing. What is it?

#2 The machine to the right was used on a farm on South Burdick Street. What is it?

#3 What was the tool above used for? How is it linked to the grandfather clock on exhibit at the museum?

#4 Why does this gold miner's vest have so many little pockets?
What is “The Collection?”

It is:
- 45,000 objects—photographs, documents, toys, tools, medical equipment, paintings, political memorabilia, furniture, Egyptian antiquities... the list goes on and on.
- used to interpret and preserve the history, technology and culture of our area.
- material donated by the citizens, businesses, and institutions of Southwest Michigan.

What does the museum collect today?
Today—more than ever—the museum’s collection is being built around the everyday “stuff” of our lives. And they’re things you might not expect, such as...
- a GI Joe or Chatty Cathy doll
- 1960s psyche delic posters
- cheerleading outfits and sports uniforms
- locally made products
- photographs and films of work, home and play

Can I help build the museum’s collection?
Is there something in your attic just gathering dust or headed for the landfill? Call us! Your piece of history may help tell the story of Southwest Michigan and its citizens. If you think you have a donation for the museum’s collection, contact either:

Tom Dietz, curator of research
tdietz@kvcc.edu  373-7984
or
Paula Metzner, collections manager
pmetzner@kvcc.edu  373-7958

Make YOUR collections part of our collection!

Collection Donors for Year 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Donation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl H. Benson</td>
<td>Movie Projector</td>
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<td>Bronson Health Care</td>
<td>Nurse Uniforms</td>
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<td>Phyllis Barkirk</td>
<td>Lockshore Dairy Order Card</td>
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<td>Sharon Carlson</td>
<td>Pair of Shoes</td>
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<td>Marilyn Carr</td>
<td>Baseball Uniforms</td>
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<td>Robin Colby</td>
<td>Travel Vanity Set</td>
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<td>Michael Collins</td>
<td>Haworth Vanity Set</td>
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<td>Gene Conrad</td>
<td>Lightbulbs</td>
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<td>A. Robert Corstange</td>
<td>Oral Thermometer</td>
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<td>Frank Eichelberg</td>
<td>Civil Defense Gas Mask</td>
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<td>Valerie Eisenberg</td>
<td>Sunglasses and Case</td>
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<td>Sharon Ferraro</td>
<td>Furnace Door</td>
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<td>First Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>KVP Christmas Booklet</td>
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<td>A.O. Green</td>
<td>RCA Television</td>
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<td>Ramon Hamilton</td>
<td>“Michigan...” Sheet Music</td>
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<td>Frances Kimball</td>
<td>Upjohn Team Awards</td>
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<td>John Kloosterman</td>
<td>Celery Tying Machines</td>
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<td>Jackie Light</td>
<td>Shakespeare Golf Balls</td>
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<td>Vera Loscalzo</td>
<td>Immigrant Trunk and Family Documents</td>
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<td>Amie Mack</td>
<td>Sadiron</td>
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<td>Paula Metzner</td>
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<td>Ihling Bros. Clothes Brush</td>
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<td>Kalamazoo Postcard</td>
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<td>Robert Montague</td>
<td>Coin Holder</td>
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<td>Neptune Historical Museum</td>
<td>Kalamazoo Postcards</td>
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<td>Patrick Norris</td>
<td>National City Ballpoint Pen</td>
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<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Norman Nuyen</td>
<td>Philco Television</td>
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<td>Martha Parfet</td>
<td>Gilmore Bros. Documents</td>
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<td>Brenda A. Parker</td>
<td>Wedding Dress</td>
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<td>Eileen Potts</td>
<td>World War II Footlocker</td>
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<td>Walter Schneider</td>
<td>Cottage Cheese Containers</td>
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<td>Eric Schreur</td>
<td>Political Buttons</td>
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<td>Roger Ulrich</td>
<td>School Desk</td>
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<td>Herman Vanders</td>
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<td>Mary Van Hout</td>
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<td>V&amp;A Bootery Shoehorn</td>
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<td>Patricia Wagner</td>
<td>Bathing Suit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Axtell Street Photograph</td>
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<td></td>
<td>World War I Sheet Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Wales</td>
<td>Hair Wreath</td>
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Science is fun, fundamental and free at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

After more than five years and nearly 650,000 visitors, the museum in downtown Kalamazoo has installed a new hands-on gallery, “Science in Motion,” that promotes discovery, exploring and experimenting.

The 3,000-square-foot gallery takes its name from the perspective of moving ahead in one’s thoughts, ideas and understanding of the scientific process. It was conceived by an exhibit-development team composed of museum staff members, Kalamazoo Valley Community College science faculty, and Pharmacia Corporation microbiologist Carol Baker, who is a member of the museum’s community advisory group. Their ideas were taken to Science North Enterprises of Sudbury, Ontario, for final design and implementation.

Located on the second floor, the participatory gallery invites experiencing—seeing, touching, hearing, experiments—in three main subjects: Technology, Energy and the Human Body.

“It’s a dynamic place where visitors of all ages can participate in experiments and open-ended investigations,” said Jean Stevens, curator of design. “They can become immersed in an experience that shows science to be a process of questioning, investigating, observing, interpreting and compiling information.

“The connections between science and their daily lives are reinforced,” Stevens said. “The hands-on exhibits demonstrate that science is everywhere.”

The motion of a speeding vehicle is obvious. Even the coursing of blood through a person’s veins can be comprehended. But the new gallery also explores the less obvious forms of motion—the movement of electrons along a wire, the splitting of a human cell, and the travel of light rays.

The “Race Car Challenge” is an interactive work station where vehicles can be engineered, fabricated and raced on a 14-foot track.

In a set that appears like a child’s bedroom, “Light Up My Life!” teaches about energy production, consumption, transfer and conservation as visitors use their muscle power to gain understanding about physical energy as...
it translates to electrical energy, current and voltage. Featured are familiar elements of a child’s lifestyle to make the “science-is-everywhere” connection.

“Heart Throb” explores the engine that drives the body, pumping blood through an intricate network of small and large vessels and carrying oxygen to all parts. The mainstay of this exhibit is a large-scale, interactive model of the human heart.

“Since a person can’t see his or her heart pumping away inside the body,”

Stevens said, “the model illustrates what the heart looks like and does during physical activity.”

Other components of the Human Body section promote hands-on investigations that develop a better understanding and deeper appreciation of how and why people can move, breath, heal themselves, keep warm and consume energy.

At each station, visitors can use their own bodies for testing and reference points—taking one’s own pulse to learn about how factors affect heart rate; measuring the oxygen saturation in their blood and why that is important; and using a step-unit exerciser to see the impact of physical activity on heart rate and its importance for fitness.

A special section of the new gallery is “Recollections.” Called the most popular exhibit at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, only 40 museums worldwide have “Recollections” on their premises.

Created by northern California artist Ed Tannenbaum, it is described as an interactive video installation that invites the participant to move in front of a large video-projection screen.

“As you move,” Stevens said, “your image is recorded by a video camera and passed on to a computer that has special image-processing capabilities. The person’s silhouette or outline is extracted, assigned a color
“Recollections” mirrors a visitor’s every move with a kaleidoscopic display of moving colors.

based on the instant that it was recorded, and projected onto the screen. Over time, the images build up, creating a painting based on movement.”

The colors are rotated, she explained, creating an animation in “real time.” Some 256 colors can be displayed on the screen at one time. “Since people are always doing new things with the exhibit, the images never repeat. They see themselves in a rainbow of colorful computer-enhanced images that follow their every move.

“We are really pleased with how well ‘Science in Motion’ has been received so far,” said Stevens, adding that the new gallery will be bringing in new elements through the rest of the calendar year. “It fosters scientific literacy and uses Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, meaning that people learn in a variety of ways.”

Reflecting its service to the public, the care of its collections, and the standards of operations at the downtown museum is the fact that the Kalamazoo Valley Museum has again been accredited by the American Association of Museums. Of the 8,000 museums in the United States, only 750 have been accredited by the national association.

So “hands on,” it’s impossible to keep “hands off.”

Adviser profile

Carol Baker

As a microbiologist, it’s darn-near impossible for Carol Baker to have hands-on encounters with life forms that can’t be seen with the naked eye.

That’s why, as a part of the eight-member Kalamazoo Valley Museum Community Advisory Committee, she is so excited about the new exhibit, “Science in Motion”: its components are so “hands on” that it’s impossible to keep “hands off.”

Baker believes “Science in Motion” accomplishes its mission because the members of the local “think tank”—museum staff, science instructors, and volunteers like herself—engaged in true dialogue in conceiving the exhibition.

“It was a delightful experience,” she said. “Everybody felt free to offer their opinions. We were all on the same page in wanting to help educating people about science, which is a passion of mine.”

Baker’s own interest in science began in high school. After majoring in biology at the University of Michigan, she received her doctorate in microbial biology from Virginia Tech. Following a stint at Monsanto, she came to Kalamazoo to join the former Upjohn Company.

As an active member of Sigma Xi, a science group with an educational mission, Baker booked an annual series of lecture programs featuring scientists in Southwest Michigan, helped organize “Girls’ Science Days” and was appointed a charter member of the museum’s advisory committee that now includes James Melvin, Derl Oberlin, Laura Eiler, Tom Fricke, Al Heilman, Jaye Johnson and Joel Orosz.

“I like the opportunity to interact with people who share my interests,” said Baker. “It’s rewarding to be able to offer opinions, make a contribution, and have an impact.”
Sand Buries Michigan’s City of Singapore

Time stands still for no one and the fall is upon us with its crisp night air. Changes abound in the leaves, in school schedules, and in the museum.

Even our state’s geography has changed in the last 150 years. If we could turn back the clock, we would find the thriving lumber town of Singapore at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River. This port city was a hub for logging boasting three mills, two hotels, a bank, and several general stores. When the lumber was exhausted, the mills closed. The town grew quiet. The westerly winds slowly began to shift the sand dunes into the streets until only the tops of chimneys were visible. Finally even those rooftops were buried under the dunes.

The city of Singapore still lies under the dunes near Saugatuck, but you can see a model of these migrating sand dunes overtaking a “city” in the museum’s Seasons of Southwest Michigan exhibit called Aeolian Landscape. You control the wind direction in the exhibit to either bury or exhume a town.

The changes that overtook the city of Singapore took just a little over 100 years; a mere blink of the geological eye. Changes in the museum have been even quicker with the addition of the new science gallery. When you have completed your exploration of dune migration, make sure that you see all the changes on the second floor. Feel the need for speed? Then build your dream machine and take it for a test drive on the slot-car speedway. Do you have a magnetic personality? Then try out all of the new experiments using magnets and magnetism. Full of hot air? Try the working model of the lungs.

The sands of change are marching on. Hurry to the museum to see what’s just blown in.

Mary and Robert White of Portage, Michigan examine the Aeolian Landscape exhibit at the museum

Deb Bryant, Geo-Science instructor
KVCC Science Department
Long ago, people invented simple machines to help make their work easier. Work can mean many things, but in science doing work means using a force (a push or a pull) to move an object over some distance. Simple machines include the lever, the wheel and axle, the pulley, the inclined plane, the screw, and the wedge. Here are some machine-related puzzles for you to try. Have fun! And visit the new science gallery at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum to see other examples of simple machines.

**TRY THIS AT HOME**

See how a lever works by making one yourself. You’ll need a heavy book, a small block, and a wooden ruler. Look at the two pictures. Which way do you think will be easier to lift the book? Now try both ways. Which lever was easier? Was your prediction (guess) right? Experiment some more. Try: using a bigger block... moving the block... or using a longer lever.
Our Solar System contains nine unique planets that vary in size, composition and distance from the Sun. Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun, followed by Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and finally, Pluto. (Beginning in 1980, Pluto was the Solar System’s “8th planet.” Its highly elliptical orbit placed Pluto closer to the Sun than Neptune until 1999 when it, once again, became the furthest planet.)

The inner planets—Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars, referred to as the terrestrial planets — are small, rocky, dense-bodied and close to the Sun. The outer Jovian planets—Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune—are massive, gaseous bodies far from the Sun. Pluto, in some respects, is similar to the terrestrial planets and, in other respects, more like a comet.

**MATERIALS YOU’LL NEED:**

Lightweight cardboard, two coat hangers, crayons or paint, and string.

*Proportional Planet Diameters:*
- Mercury .................. 5 cm (2 in)
- Venus ..................... 12 cm (4.8 in)
- Earth .................... 12 cm (4.8 in)
- Mars ..................... 7 cm (2.8 in)
- Jupiter ................... 43 cm (57.2 in)
- Saturn ................... 20 cm (48 in)
- Uranus ................... 5 1/2 cm (20.4 in)
- Neptune .................. 8 cm (19.6 in)
- Pluto ..................... 2 cm (.8 in)

**PROCEDURE:**

- Trace circles onto the cardboard with the above diameters. (If the Jovian planets are too large, make the circles smaller.)
- Color the planets, using your imagination or pictures from books. Our web site at http://kvm.kvcc.edu also has great links to information about the planets.

- Cut out the planets. Poke a hole in the top of each planet. Thread a string through each hole.
- Attach the planets to the coat hanger in the above order. You may want to separate the inner terrestrial planets and the outer Jovian planets onto individual coat hangers.

*Do the planets have anything in common? Can they be divided into different groups? What do you think each planet is made of? Can you see planets in the night sky? Would they look like this? Or would they look like bright stars?***
At the end of the first “Star Trek” movie, Captain James T. Kirk is asked “Where to, Captain?” Sitting in the captain’s chair on the bridge of the Starship Enterprise, Kirk, like a wide-eyed child experiencing that first meaningful Christmas, looks toward deep space and says, “Out there.”

With more than 40 shows to choose from, “Out There” is in downtown Kalamazoo at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and its 115-seat planetarium theater.

Through the electronic and computerized wizardry of its Digistar II and Sky-Skan systems, visitors get up close and personal with the universe as it unfolds above them on its 50-foot dome. After treks to and through stars, solar systems, meteor showers, galaxies and black holes, they depart, wondering if they had really blasted off from Chicago, New York or San Francisco, and not a place called Kalamazoo.

“At the time we opened in February of 1996,” says planetarium coordinator Eric Schreur, “it was the most advanced system of any in the state. Other planetariums in Michigan have since followed Kalamazoo’s lead, but ours is still state of the art. Where we are still unique is the number of shows that we have available,” Schreur said about the 40 in his inventory. “Most only have three or four shows for school groups and the public. Within five minutes of each other, we can load a show for a school group, for families, and for advanced audiences who are more familiar with astronomy.”

Several have been locally produced by Schreur, including “Sky Legends of the Three Fires,” which uses the legends of three Native American tribes in Michigan to explain their culture’s views of the constellations, and “Secrets in the Sky,” based on a play about how runaway slaves used the
The system can capture the combination of an atom of oxygen with two of hydrogen to form the molecular compound known as water. It can give the audience a view of our sun from the prospective of another star rather than from Earth. It can show how the universe was configured billions of years ago.

Even turning on the Digistar is impressive. Projected on the dome is the retractable roof of an observatory. As it slides open, slowly coming into view is the night sky and the star fields. Suddenly, you are “out there,” in something of a time warp moving from the Milky Way to another galaxy as if part of a space adventure.

Just as quickly, you can be “in there,” inside a grain of sand or bouncing from component to component in an organic compound from which gasoline is derived. You can be plunged into “Inner Space,” examining the inside of a white blood cell attacking a cancer cell, a mosquito’s sting, and the hairs of the inner ear. When magnified a million times or so, a red blood cell or a taste bud takes on extraterrestrial trappings.

Some of the presentations at the Universe Theater and Planetarium allow the audience to chart its course and determine potential destinations by consensus. On the arm of each family-room-comfort seat is a three-button keypad for people to vote on which planet to visit, which path to follow or which plan to pursue.


While there is no admission fee to the museum, tickets cost $3 each for planetarium experiences. Shows last from 20 to 45 minutes.
"The Big Bang" for Eric Schreur’s choice of a career came on a camping trip to Gun Lake when, as a young lad, he stretched out on a dock and watched the annual Persied meteor shower in an August’s night sky. That prompted the future coordinator of the planetarium at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum to sign up for an astronomy class at Loy Norrix High School from which he graduated in 1969.

He joined the Kalamazoo Astronomy Club about the same time. That and his class work took him at least once a week to the community’s Hans Baldauf Planetarium that was located on the second floor of the Kalamazoo Public Library.

“The planetarium’s director was looking for volunteers to conduct weekend programs,” said Schreur, who was born and raised in Kalamazoo, “and that’s how I got involved.”

What fascinated him about the blackness of the infinity that he observed overhead?

A bent for science ran in the family. His father, a chemist by profession, worked as a lab director for the former Shakespeare Co. He oversaw the chemistry in plating operations in the manufacture of fishing gear, golf clubs and automotive parts.

Growing up, Schreur delved into photography and into operating a ham radio station. “But the astronomy class at Norrix is what really got me going,” he said. “I became deeply interested in discovering where I fit into the universe around me. They call it the religion of astronomy.”

While Schreur sampled life in the mainstream workforce, he maintained his connection to the local planetarium, advancing to the role of substitute operator and, by the fall of 1985, was working there on a part-time basis. He eventually graduated from Western Michigan University with a twin major in the earth and computer sciences, and a continuing passion for astronomy, which evolved from a hobby to a career.

He’s witnessed the technological evolution, too. Where planetarium shows once offered pinpoints of light mapping out the night sky on a domed ceiling, the Universe Theater and Planetarium at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum features a mixture of three-dimensional imagery, detailed photos of celestial bodies and black holes, inside looks at molecules, audience participation, the potential to project almost anything, and, thanks to Schreur, a little humor.

Never in Schreur’s wildest childhood dreams on that August night on Gun Lake did he envision where his hobby-turned-career would take him in June of 2001.

He was among the multitudes of astronomers and stargazers who gathered near Lusaka, Zambia, to witness the first total solar eclipse of the millennium, creating a spectacle of darks and lights over central Africa.

When the moon blocked the rays of the sun, Schreur and others in the shadow below saw the sky suddenly darken into twilight, bringing planets and in some cases bright stars into view.

That’s about as close as a person can get to figuring out one’s place in the universe.
A hidden Kalamazoo treasure was found in the rafters of Jim Gilmore Enterprises in April 1994. While the building at 162 E. Michigan Ave. was being remodeled, Arthur Dye, a member of the work crew, noticed a large piece of paper rolled up and stuck through a knothole in the wood. The paper was very fragile, torn and dirty. Instead of tossing it in the trash, something told him it might be important. He turned it over to the project engineer Dick Bye, and by October of that year it was brought to the museum as a donation.

The museum’s collection staff immediately concluded that there might be some historical value in this crumpled roll of paper and sent it to the conservation lab at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Here the paper was humidified and flattened. The dirt was removed with special soft erasers. The tears and areas of loss were repaired with a special Japanese paper and wheat paste, then colored to match the rest of the document.

On its return to the museum, the collection staff couldn’t believe it was the same damaged document! It was beautifully restored and its secrets revealed. It was an 1867 playbill from the first known theatre in Kalamazoo—Union Hall. The hall was built in 1865, at the end of the Civil War, and closed in 1900. Its location was the southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Portage Street.

Because of the watchful eye and sense of history of a remodeling crew, this 134-year-old Kalamazoo treasure was saved. It is believed to be the earliest document of its kind to be preserved in Kalamazoo.

Paula Metzner, collections manager

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of the late Jim Gilmore Jr. His gift reflected his continuous dedication and loyalty to the greater Kalamazoo community.
When Secretary of War Hugh Brady ordered the removal of the remaining Indians from Southwest Michigan in 1840, one group successfully resisted. Leopold Pokagon’s band of Potawatomi secured a court order from Michigan Supreme Court Justice Epaphroditus Ransom that confirmed they had a legal right to remain in Berrien County. Together with their local supporters, some of whom were armed, they prevented the U. S. Army from forcing them off their land. Their descendants live in Southwest Michigan to this day.

We often think that the history of this region dates to the early 1800s. But people lived here, built their homes here, and raised their families here, long before our ancestors knew this place existed. Stone tools, buried for centuries, are found occasionally, silent evidence of ancient people. Nineteenth-century settlers found earthen mounds and carefully landscaped garden beds, so old that not even the Native Americans then living here knew for certain who had built them.

Written records for this region date to the French explorers in the 16th and 17th centuries. Seeking the fabled “Northwest Passage” to Asia and valuable furs, these voyagers and fur traders traveled throughout Michigan. In 1680, the explorer, Robert LaSalle, walked across Michigan, providing the first written description of what is now Kalamazoo County.

European contact dramatically affected the Native Americans. In exchange for European goods, people who had hunted animals only for food and clothing began to hunt and trap far beyond their own needs. They competed with other native peoples for control of the fur trade. They formed alliances alternately with the English or the French to try to preserve their way of life.

The 1783 Treaty of Paris made Michigan part of the new United States. In several treaties from the 1780s through the 1830s, the American government forced the natives to give up ownership of their lands. The treaties required the Indians to move west of the Mississippi River to Indian Territory in modern Kansas and Oklahoma.

When Bazel Harrison, Titus Bronson, and other pioneers settled in Kalamazoo County, the Potawatomi still lived here although officially confined to reservations. They built homes, farmed corn and squash, and fished and hunted. Long accustomed to Europeans and Americans, they helped the first settlers, teaching them how and where to hunt, trading them venison and maple syrup, and helping them build their homes and barns.

The relations between the Potawatomi and the settlers were peaceful, even friendly most of the time, as the settlers described in their diaries and letters. Yet the Americans wanted more land and would not be satisfied until the Native Americans were removed. In 1840, the U.S. Army enforced the treaties and removed most of the Potawatomi from their homelands. Some Pokagon Potawatomi remained and a few others, unable to adapt to life on the western plains, straggled back. In large measure, though, the people who had lived here for thousands of years had been removed from their lands.

The Potawatomi did not disappear, however. Dispossessed from their land, confronted by constant efforts to eradicate their culture, they, as with other Native Americans, persisted. Today, their tribal gatherings and powwows strengthen ties to past generations and teach the young of their heritage. Their presence reminds us that we are relative newcomers who have lived here but a short time compared to the centuries this land was home to native peoples.

Tom Dietz, curator of research
Valarie Oostindie volunteers some of her free time so that some “footprints on the sands of time”—be they antique toys, Civil War memorabilia, old photos or clothes from a bygone era—are preserved for future generations.

After logging more than 20 years for The Upjohn Co. and another five for the Asgrow Seed Co., Oostindie decided to follow her husband into retirement.

The Kalamazoo native’s decision coincided with the anticipated grand opening of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum in February of 1996.

“I realized that I had to do something after I retired and my answer came in an article I read in The Kalamazoo Gazette about the new museum needing volunteers for its opening.”

Oostindie, who was a history major during her undergraduate days at Western Michigan University, was intrigued. After all, her favorite course at Western had been one that was linked to museums in Southwest Michigan.

After performing a variety of duties, she settled about four years ago as a volunteer for collections coordinator Paula Metzner.

“I love the old objects,” she said, “because many artifacts come with some interesting history tied to them.”

Oostindie also picked up a new skill, becoming familiar with the ARGUS computerized data-base system that the collections division installed. She catalogs each artifact, enters a description into the computer, and numbers each as part of the museum’s inventory.

“In cataloging an object,” she said, “you have to take a precise measurement, which is often not very easy to do. You enter a history of the object, who made it, where it came from, and who used it. That frequently requires checking out research books and using the Internet.”

Her favorites at the museum are the toy trucks, planes, and card games that date to the 1920s, ‘30s and 1940s. Although she’s surrounded by the old during her volunteer hours at the downtown museum, she always finds something new and challenging.

“It could be toys one week, clothes the next, and documents, letters, photographs, and bank records the next,” she said.

Oostindie is among the cadre of senior volunteers at the museum. Some have been giving of their time and talents for a dozen years. “They are really a part of our staff,” said Valerie Eisenberg, whose duties include coordinating the staff of volunteers. “We could not operate without them.”

When helping to unpack the museum’s collections after the move was made from the former site to the new facility, Oostindie was horrified when a vintage doll she handled literally fell apart.

“At first, I felt just awful,” Oostindie said, “but that quickly passed when I learned that the problem was not my handling. A rubber band inside had deteriorated. A new one made it as good as new, so to speak.”

The museum’s “old stuff” is in good hands with Valarie Oostindie. •••

Have you ever wanted to work in a museum? Join our team and share your knowledge and skills with visitors in a variety of areas such as the science gallery, Challenger Learning Center, preschool play area, special exhibition gallery, and museum store. Learn to give demonstrations on electricity, air pressure, and magnetism. Be an explainer during school visits or on weekends. If space science fascinates you, talk with curious visitors about the Challenger’s history and programming.

The volunteer program offers training in all areas, as well as invitations to private openings of special exhibitions, potluck events, recognition luncheons, trips to other museums, and free parking.

Call Valerie Eisenberg, volunteer coordinator, at (616) 373-7986 and find out how you can be part of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.
SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

THE BIG ADVENTURE
Through January 20, 2002
Experience a fun-filled, action-packed, interactive exhibit that provides exciting and challenging experiences. Free
“The Big Adventure” was created and is circulated by The Children’s Museum of Houston in collaboration with the Youth Museum Exhibit Collaborative (“YMEC”).

SOLVE-IT-CENTRAL
Through January 20, 2002
Sixteen hands-on exhibit components encourage group interaction. This exhibit proves that you can solve problems even before you realize it—and have fun doing it. Free
This Exhibition was developed by the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, Ann Arbor, MI with support from the National Science Foundation.

COMING ATTRACTION:

IBM PRESENTS ARITHMETRICKS: PERFECTLY PERPLEXING PUZZLES
Feb. 16 – June 2, 2002
Step right up to the greatest math show on Earth! Bring your brainpower and test your skills! Ringmaster Fineas Polygon is your guide as you explore baffling and perplexing math puzzles and a large maze in the turn-of-the-century circus setting. Each puzzle has three levels of difficulty to give puzzle lovers of all ages a challenge. The Tower of Annny, Magic Squares, Funny Money and other puzzling exhibits will test your mathematical abilities as well as your patience and resolve. Six puzzles are featured in Pandora’s Palace of Perplexing Paradoxes, a sideshow of puzzles created for even more amusement. Preschoolers will enjoy Arithmetots, a special area designed just for them. Free
“IBM Presents Arithmetricks: Perfectly Perplexing Puzzles” was created with support from IBM Canada Ltd and is circulated by SCIENCE WORLD British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

FEATURED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

14TH ANNUAL CHEMISTRY DAY
Saturday, Nov. 3 Noon – 4 p.m.
Science demonstrations that will amaze you! Free

THANKSGIVING SMORGASBORD
Friday & Saturday, Nov. 23 & 24
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Fly a mission, watch a planetarium show, see free science and history demonstrations. Demonstrations are free; mini-missions and planetarium shows—$3/person

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST....!
Saturday, Dec. 1
1 – 4 p.m.
Make your own gifts while our best supplies last! Free
While Supplies Last...! will also be taking place at the Mercantile. Kids, bring your holiday list with you because NO ADULTS ALLOWED!! Staff will be on hand to help children stay within a budget and pick out gifts for family and friends. Free gift-wrapping and snacks available.
HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

HOLIDAY MINI-MISSIONS
Dec. 26, 27, 28, 31 & Jan. 1 and 2
11:30 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m.  $3/person

HOLIDAY PLANETARIUM SHOWS:
Dec. 26, 27, 28, 31, & Jan. 1, 2, 3, 4;
$3/person
Where in the Universe is Carmen Sandiego?—II 2 p.m.
Season of Light  10 a.m. & 4 p.m.

DEMONSTRATIONS
Dec. 26, 27, 28, 31 & Jan. 1, 2, 3, 4
1 and 2 p.m.  Free
Join us for two weeks of holiday programs,
two days of which include additional activities at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts.

CIRCUS ADVENTURE
Wednesday, Jan. 2  1 – 4 p.m.
Make your own circus clowns, acrobats, elephants and more.  Free

THE ART FAIR
Thursday, Jan. 3  1 – 4 p.m.
Paintings, sculptures, prints and collages will line the walls as children become artists.  Free

CARNIVAL GAMES
Friday, Jan. 4  1 – 4 p.m.
The museum becomes a carnival full of games and prizes. Step right up and try your luck!  Free

For more information about programs, call (616) 373-7990 or visit our website at http://kvm.kvcc.edu

STORYBOOK FESTIVAL
Monday, Dec. 31  1 – 4 p.m.
A parade of storybook characters and a variety of books will be in the center ring under the Big Top today!  Free

MAGICAL MAYHEM
Tuesday, Jan. 1  1 – 4 p.m.
Learn to be a magician: pull a rabbit out of a hat, do card tricks, learn to juggle and more!  Free
MINI-MISSIONS & PLANETARIUM SHOWS

Regularly scheduled shows November through the beginning of January

VOYAGE TO MARS: MINI-MISSION
Saturdays & Sundays at 3 p.m.
Live out your space-age fantasies with this exciting space adventure. Ages 6 & up, $3/person. Ages 6 – 11 must be accompanied by a partner 12 years or older.

WHERE IN THE UNIVERSE IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO? — II
Saturday & Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
Through Jan. 6
Join the ranks of our junior gumshoes as we try to capture Carmen before she can take possession of the black hole. $3/person
Where in the Universe is Carmen Sandiego?—II™ was created, written and produced by Dr. William Gutsch under license from and in conjunction with The Learning Company. Carmen Sandiego™, Where in Space is Carmen Sandiego®, and all related characters and names are copyrights and trademarks of Educational Properties LLC. Used with permission. Where in the Universe is Carmen Sandiego?—II™ is based on the software program Where in Space is Carmen Sandiego?™ created by Broderbund Software

EXPLORERS OF MAUNA KEA
Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday at 4 p.m.
Through Nov. 18
Join astronomers at the top of Hawaii’s Mauna Kea to explore the universe through the world’s most modern telescopes. $3/person

SEASON OF LIGHT
Wednesdays, Saturdays & Sundays at 4 p.m.
Nov. 21 – Jan. 6
This program explores the origins and meanings of holiday customs from a variety of cultures and looks for connections linking the holidays with the stars. Ages 5 and up. $3/person

CHILDREN’S LANDSCAPE
FREE DROP-IN PLAY IN THE PRESCHOOL PLAY AREA

HOME, SWEET HOME
November—Explore homes made from different materials, practice building and then travel into space. From your community to the stars, discover more about where you live.

COLORS AND SHAPES
December/January—You’ll be surprised at the many ways to explore and investigate the shapes and colors around us.

TEACHER-LED PROGRAMS
Offered Mondays through Fridays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and available to families and preschool groups.

CIRCLE TIME PROGRAMS
Twenty minutes of stories and musical activities. Free.

CLASSES
Approximately one hour and includes experiments, hands-on crafts, and group activities. Tickets are $2 per child and may be purchased at the front desk.
MONDAYS: Circle Time for Toddlers (2 year olds) Free
TUESDAY: Preschool Classes (ages 3-5) $2/child
WEDNESDAY: Circle Time Stories for Preschoolers (ages 3-5) Free
THURSDAY: Circle Time Music for Preschoolers (ages 3-5) Free
FRIDAY: Preschool Classes (ages 3-5) $2/child

Kalamazoo Valley Museum is handicapped accessible. Sign-language interpreters may be scheduled for programs with a minimum of two weeks’ notice. Assisted listening devices are also available in the planetarium. Our TDD number is: 616/373-7982. For details on programs and times, visit us at: http://kvm.kvcc.edu or phone 616/373-7990 or 800/772-3370.
Had you been reading the weekly Kalamazoo Gazette on Friday, April 20, 1881, a small item on page 4, column 3, might have caught your eye. It reported on a special meeting of the board of education, and as it turned out, on the birth of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. By unanimous resolution, the school board formally accepted a gift of seashells, coral, and rock specimens from Horace Peck using language that acknowledged the creation of a public museum.

“Resolved, That the gratitude of the people of this district is due, and the hearty thanks of this board are hereby tendered to Horace M. Peck, Esq. for this large and beautiful collection of sea shells, corals, fossils and marbles, which he has tendered to the school district in the interest of public education.

Resolved, That these specimens shall be and are hereby accepted as the beginning of a museum; they shall be known and preserved as the Peck Collection in the cases already authorized by this board to be built in the present public library rooms; and they shall be arranged according to the labels furnished by Prof. H. T. Woodman, of Dubuque, by whom the collection was made and of whom it was purchased.

Resolved, That contributions to the museum so auspiciously begun, be and are hereby solicited from any and all persons of collection of specimens or single specimens in any or all departments of natural history and archaeology; and that assurance be given that such contributed specimens and collections shall be properly acknowledged and credited to the respective contributors and suitably displayed and carefully preserved by the board of education.”

With the school board’s formal resolutions of thanks, the new public museum was born. In 1893, the library moved to its first permanent home at the corner of Rose and South streets. Housed in the basement of the new building, Mr. Peck’s corals are on view in the photograph of the museum interior taken at the turn of the century.

Peck’s son, Horace B. Peck, built a family home next door to the public library. The Peck House became the museum’s first separate home in 1927 when the board of education purchased the stately Queen Anne residence for use as the Kalamazoo Museum. On permanent exhibit in the Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s core gallery is the restored stained glass window that graced the stairway of the Peck House.

In 1959 both the Peck House and the original library building were demolished to make room for a new air-conditioned Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum. The Kalamazoo Museum was renamed the Kalamazoo Public Museum. Housed on the second floor and in the basement, it continued as a department of the Kalamazoo Public Library until 1984. Then in 1991, following a brief period of independent operation under separate school board governance, the museum became part of Kalamazoo Valley Community College. In 1996, thanks to the leadership of the college and the generosity of the community it had served for over a century, the museum was able to move two blocks north on Rose Street into a state-of-the-art facility, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

So now, as they say, you know why the new museum is really 121 years old!

—Patrick Norris, director