



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 12, 2008

Contact: Jason Archer; Science Dome Director; Acting Marketing Manager

The Children's Museum

Email: Jarcher@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org

Phone: 860.231.2830, Ext. 40

Photo Captions: Stella in the Gengras Planetarium & SciDome projector

Children's Museum Star Projector "Stella" Retires

Contest will name new planetarium projector

June 12, 2008 (West Hartford, CT)...On June 16, the Gengras Planetarium's forty year old star projector at The Children's Museum in West Hartford will leave for its new retirement home in California. "Stella," a Spitz STP Planetarium Projector, retired last year to make way for a digitally based E & S Spitz SciDome HB Projector funded by a grant from Travelers. Now, Stella will be the centerpiece of the Planetarium Projector Museum in Big Bear Lake, California.

Like "Conny," the Museum's life-sized replica sperm whale, Stella was something of an icon for kids and families at the Museum. Said Owen Phairis, Curator of the Planetarium Projector Museum, "This is just the start of a new chapter in Stella's life. She will be taking center stage again by joining other retired antique planetarium instruments." The old planetarium projector was one of only twelve of its kind ever made. As if sunny California is not enough, parts of the system that supported "Stella" will retire to the Miami Space Transit Planetarium in Florida

and help keep its STP projector operating.

Said Jason Archer, Director of the Science Dome Director at Gengras Planetarium, “We will miss Stella but it’s time to give the new kid on the block a name. Part of all our shows is introducing kids and families to the real star and we can’t just keep calling the new projector ‘big, box-thingy in the middle of the room with the light coming out of the top’. So what better way to find a name than to ask the kids who love The Children’s Museum.”

From June 23 to September 3, 2008, children aged 12 and younger can “Name Our New Star” by sending suggested names to The Children’s Museum, including a 300-word essay describing why the name should be selected. Contest details and an entry form are available on line at detailed rules and an application can be found at www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org on line. Entries may also be mailed to Jason Archer, The Children’s Museum, 950 Trout Brook Drive, West Hartford, CT 06119, or dropped off while seeing a planetarium show. The contest winner will have his or her name engraved on a plaque at Gengras Planetarium and be treated to a family party to celebrate the new name.

###



