

22/4/2008



International Space Station project: 2008 update #11

Space news: There has been plenty of space activity to keep St Thomas' students busy in the past week. Wrap-ups of those events follow. Another test of the St Thomas radio station will be held in about two weeks. More information on this will be included in next week's Thomataalk.

1. **Starry Night Planetarium visit** - "AWESOME", "AMAZING" and "REALLY NEAT" were just some of descriptions from students experiencing the cosmic wonders of the night sky during a tour of a mobile starlab last Thursday and Friday. Students saw stars move across the night sky, the planets, moon, Southern Cross and pictures of zodiac constellations including their birthday stars. They were introduced to currently visible planets, constellations and stars to help budding astronomers find their way around the sky. A computer driven telescope was used to drive them through the Moon and Planets and a closer view of the Moon was provided on a large screen projection. Perth Street Park was used as the launching pad for a safe rocket demonstration fuelled by Alka Seltza, air, water and solid fuel. The visit to the school was part of the many fun activities arranged as part of the Space Station Project to teach students across all years about astronomy and our amazing Universe. Our thanks again to the P&F for sponsoring this special event and to Angela for organising class groups.

2. **Astronomy Night - Rain earlier in the day and overcast skies failed to deter the enthusiasm of a committed group of junior star gazers** at last Thursday's Astronomy Night. Heavy clouds shifted long enough for most of those lined up for extraterrestrial gazing to get a closer view of the moon via the smaller telescope. Unfortunately, threats of heavier downpours made it impractical for the much larger telescope from the Starry Night Planetarium to be unloaded.

Space Station Project competitions:

1. **Space Art Show – open to all students from Prep to Year 7** – students have until next Wednesday (30th April) to post their entries for the Space Art Show competition. To enter, all you have to do is create an "Out of This World" drawing or painting. Entries will be judged by a panel of teachers in junior (Prep to Year 3) and senior (Years 4- 7) categories. All art work will be displayed in the hall closer to our Space Station hook up. Space tip: your might like to include a design of your own rocket or the space station, or include a star-studded scene of planets, moons, stars or a distant galaxy.....even robots or aliens. It can be as simple or full of colour or pictures art as you like. Have fun and good luck!

What is the St Thomas Space Station Project? Last year St Thomas successfully applied to NASA to host a direct radio link between the school and an astronaut on the International Space Station. This contact is part of a project called "ARISS" which is supported by amateur radio operators and NASA's education division. Updates on the project will continue to be provided in Thomataalk in the lead up to this exciting event. For further information contact Morry Clark Ph: 3901 4634 or email morryclark@optusnet.com.au. Messages can also be left at the school office in an envelope marked Attn: international Space Station Project team.