



ANGIE CAMPBELL/STAFF

Roper Mountain Science Center's T.C. Hooper Planetarium has reopened to the public after a yearlong \$1.4 million renovation project.

Science Center unveils renovated planetarium

Features include 4K projection and enhanced lighting, sound

ANGIE CAMPBELL

UPSTATE PARENT

Families who have missed Starry Nights at Roper Mountain Science Center have reason to celebrate.

The center's newly renovated T.C. Hooper Planetarium reopened to the public this weekend after a year-long \$1.4 million renovation project that includes new seats, carpet and 360-degree full immersion dome.

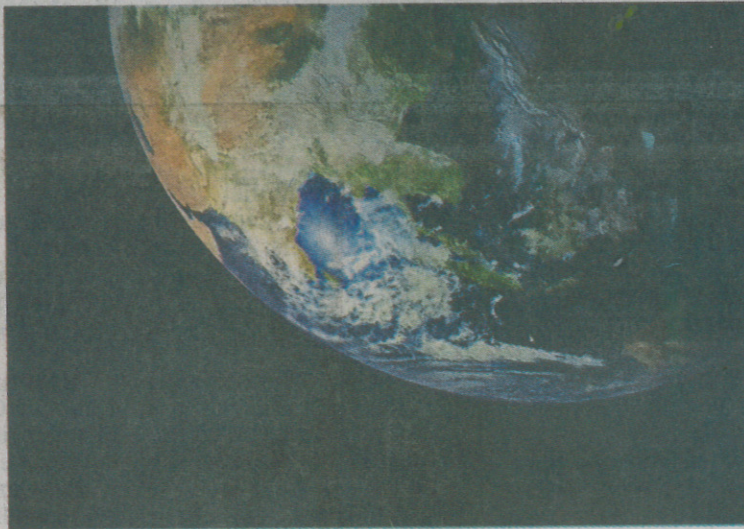
"We are very excited to show off our new planetarium," said Michael Weeks, director of RMSC, during a media and donor reception Wednesday.

New features also include 4K projection, state-of-the-art lighting and 5.1 surround sound, Weeks said.

"We have the first installation of what's called a Spitz IQ 4K system," he said. "This is the first installation in the United States, so we're definitely proud of that."

Weeks said the center serves approximately 500 students each day who travel from across the Upstate, Columbia, Georgia and North Carolina to participate in hands-on learning science labs.

Almost one year ago in late March, Roper Mountain Science Center announced via e-mail and its website that, due to the discovery of mold, the giant dome theater and planetarium



A view from Roper Mountain Science Center's newly renovated planetarium shows a satellite closeup of planet Earth.

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DIRECTOR OF ROPER MOUNTAIN SCIENCE CENTER

had been temporarily closed until further notice.

Brian McSharry, campaign chairman for the renovation project, called the renovated planetarium world-class.

"When you think about things around the country and you think of New York City, you think of world class theater," McSharry said. "You think of Los Angeles and world class

film. Maybe you think about Denver and the world class Rocky Mountains. Then you come to Greenville and you think, you know, there are some pretty cool things going on in Greenville that are world class."

He said Roper Mountain Science Center now falls into that category. Greenville County Schools opened the center in 1984.

"Think back to 1984, and we didn't know what STEM was," he said. "Now everybody in the whole country is saying, 'STEM — we've got to have it in our science program.' We have this tremendous asset. Can you imagine trying to build this today?"

While Greenville County Schools paid for much of the project, the RMSC Association was tasked with raising \$450,000, he said. McSharry said the community rallied around the center and donations came from many entities, including the Daniel Mickel Foundation, Symmes Foundation, Margaret Linder Southern Fund, Hollingsworth Funds, Duke Energy Foundation, BMW, ScanSource, Spinx, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Fluor, Graham Foundation, ReWa, GE, Lockheed Martin, Piedmont Arthritis, Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Dr. Ernie Lathem.

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tice nurses should not be practicing medicine. The

Thompson said the real reason for the opposition

bill would modernize the law to reflect the current A

RMSC

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Craig McCoy, CEO of Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, said the health system was honored to provide funds for the new state-of-the-art 4K projection system in the planetarium.

One of the planetarium's new shows will allow students to go inside the human body and see how it works.

"We are particularly enthusiastic about the Zygote Human Body program as attendees will be exposed to the study of human life and as a result could potentially be inspired to consider the medical profes-

sion," he said. "We hope students across the Upstate and the state of South Carolina will be inspired to learn and reach their full potential as a result of the educational offerings at Roper Mountain Science Center."

Einstein's telescope, RMSC's 23-inch refractor telescope, is next to the planetarium in the Charles E. Daniel Observatory. Both will be open during the Starry Nights program, which begins at 7 p.m. Friday nights.

Roper Mountain Science Center features public programs each Friday and select second Saturdays.

It is located at 402 Roper Mountain Road in Greenville.

Uptick

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The Courtyard, but there is a length of stay restriction imposed that follows the tournament schedule and tries to capture attendees that are coming to see their team play, rather than guests looking to just spend a day or two in Greenville.

Keeping people in their hotels, despite their beloved team possibly getting knocked out, Lock said shouldn't be that difficult.

"In the NCAA, even if your team checks out early, there's enough fan base in the market," he said.

College basketball



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