

A new planet where no man has been

The world of astronomy is almost like Disney Land.

The other day I heard a group of astronomers had discovered another planet orbiting a star called 51 Pegasus. The planet is much larger than the earth and 20 times closer to the star than the earth to the sun. This makes the surface temperature about 1800 degrees, according to the astronomers.

Now all that information is very interesting, but I fail to see why so many people in the scientific community are so excited about it. Since travel to the planet would take 40 light years, it obviously isn't going to be a popular spot to spend a long weekend. If we could travel at the speed of light, it would take 80 years for the round trip.

Personally, I don't think I can set aside the time, so I am not going to plan a trip to the newly discovered planet.

In case some hotshot travel agent does book a trip, I suggest the following passenger list: Louis Farrakhan, Robert Dole, Jesse Jackson, Roseanne Barr (or whatever her current name is), President Fuzzy and Saddam Hussein. There are more, and probably many more you'd like to see take the trip, but that list is good enough for starters.

I can't think of any good use for the planet except that it may come in handy for George Shinn, as he is looking for a site for a new basketball arena for his Hornets.

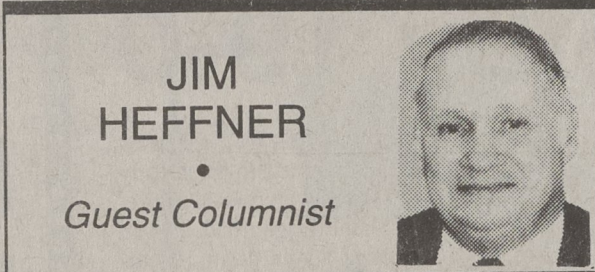
I guess astronomers don't have a lot to do, so they sit around and discover new heavenly bodies so far from the earth that nobody cares about them, except other astronomers.

Don't get me wrong, I like stargazing. I've seen the rings around Pluto through my son's telescope, and found the view fascinating, but I'm not planning on throwing a party to celebrate the discovery of a planet that far away.

To each his own I guess.

A million men - I see where the much ballyhooed million man march drew approximately 400,000 participants, forcing Louis Farrakhan to sue the U.S. Park Service for providing the estimated count. That's curious to say the least. If Farrakhan's suit is upheld, what will the park service do, revise their count?

I don't understand why Farrakhan doesn't just



JIM HEFFNER
Guest Columnist

accept the count and shut up. After all, getting 400,000 men to do anything should be considered an accomplishment.

Every time there's a march on Washington, the argument about numbers comes up. It's silly, all anyone has to do to get an accurate count is take a lesson from Harry S. Truman.

Truman was asked once how many people attended one of his political rallies held in a large field in the midwest, and he promptly replied with a number which was later to prove very close.

"How did you do that?" he was asked.

"That's no big secret," Truman said. "Years ago I figured out that if you count the number of people in a 10 square foot space, then find out how big a particular area is where people are gathered for various reasons, you can come close to an accurate count. I did that when I was a boy, so I just looked at that field, saw that almost every inch was occupied, and calculated the number of people there."

"But, how did you know how big the field was?" came the rejoinder.

"I asked the farmer who owns it," Truman said. Makes sense to me.

Braves and Indians - It was predictable that the agitators wouldn't like these two teams to square off in the World Series.

Several Indian "leaders" began complaining before the sweat had dried on the Cleveland players.

One of them, Ray Apodaca, said, "It's offensive to see people dressed in chicken feathers, painted in what they call war paint, doing the tomahawk chops and war whoops. None of that is Indian, and all of it is very demeaning."

My comment? If it isn't Indian, why raise all the fuss?

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Halloween safety tips from KMPD

Ghosts and goblins will be lurking around every neighborhood Tuesday as masquerading munchkins prowling the streets in search of goodies and fun.

Kings Mountain Police Chief Bob Hayes reminds that Halloween trick-or-treating increases child pedestrians traffic tremendously, and excited children often forget traffic rules.

Children darting across busy streets can endanger drivers, passengers and trick-or-treaters alike, so drivers should be prepared to brake suddenly for pedestrians during the early evening hours, says Hayes.

To ensure a happy and safe evening of trick-or-treating for all, the Kings Mountain Police Department suggests some safety rules that will protect children and keep parents from worry.

TIPS FOR KIDS

Stay in your neighborhood and trick-or-treat with a friend or adult. Only go to houses with lights on or Halloween decorations and don't eat any treats until your parents check them. Watch for cars when crossing the street and tell your parents about anything that makes you scared or uncomfortable and about people you may see smashing pumpkins, vandalizing or destroying property or causing problems.

TIPS FOR TREATERS

If you want trick or treaters to come to your house keep your outside and front lights on, or have Halloween decorations. Give store-wrapped or non-ed-

ible treats such as crayons, stickers, small party favors. Put your name and address on homemade goodies and give them only to children who know you. If you don't wish to participate say so and the majority of callers will leave immediately.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Make sure your child's costume allows freedom of movement and good visibility. It should be a light color or have reflective strips on it. If possible, have the kids trick or treat before dark but have them carry flashlights after dark. Insist your children trick or treat with a friend, a group or an adult and insist they stay in their own neighborhoods and on an agreed route. Check all the treats before the children eat anything and use your discretion about homemade treats. Cut fruit into pieces before eating and check for tampering. Sponsor a party in place of trick or treating. Some shopping malls sponsor parties with each shop offering treats. Some churches and schools also hold festivals. If you find anything suspicious in your child's treat or treat bag, report it to the police immediately. Make sure the kids walk, not run, from house to house. If there is no sidewalk, children should walk on the left side of the road facing traffic. Remind children to look both ways before crossing the street, taking his/her mask off if necessary to see properly. Make sure costumes are short enough so the kids won't trip and check to see that the masks fit securely to allow children full vision and unobstructed breathing.

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