Since it opened in 1973, the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center has presented the basic principles of science and technology in accessible and entertaining ways. The Science Center was immediately embraced by the San Diego community as an essential educational resource and, thanks to the efforts of a dedicated and visionary board of trustees and staff, it has achieved a remarkable record of service to the community and to the international field of informal science education.

- The Fleet opened on March 10, 1973 with the first IMAX® Dome Theater in the world—a prototype for more than 65 similar facilities in 22 countries around the planet.
- With more than 425,000 visitors a year, the Fleet is San Diego’s most visited museum.
- More students and teachers (over 110,000) take part in education programs at the Fleet than at any other cultural institution in San Diego. More than 50,000 students, teachers, and chaperones from low-income schools have benefited from free or discounted admission to the Fleet each year through our School Scholarship program.
- Our Fleet Inquiry Institute began in 2002 to provide teachers with training in inquiry-based methods to help them teach and engage their students in science.
- The Fleet is the award-winning producer/co-producer of six major IMAX films, has created three nationally traveling exhibitions, and is working on more of both.
- Our eight exhibit galleries are centers where “hands-on” and “do touch” interactive exhibits provide a unique self-guided learning experience for all ages.
- The Eugene Heikoff and Marilyn Jacobs Heikoff Giant Dome Theater, featuring the world’s biggest NanoSeam™ Dome screen, is the first Giant Dome Theater in the country to share a digital planetarium with an IMAX Dome Theater.
- In 2010, the Fleet was certified as a LEED facility by the U.S. Green Building Council for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED-EB).
- The City of San Diego honored the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center as a “Recycler of the Year” for three consecutive years (2008, 2009, and 2010), in their Waste Reduction and Recycling Awards Program. The Fleet earned the Director’s Recycling Award in 2011.

DID YOU KNOW...

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REUBEN H. FLEET SCIENCE CENTER

40th ANNIVERSARY
BIG BANG GALA
SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2013

PRESENTED BY
The Board of Trustees of the
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

AND GALA CHAIRS
Lori Fleet-Martin & Nancy Robertson
and the Big Bang Gala Committee

CELEBRATING
The 40th Anniversary of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

AND HONORING
Dr. Jeffrey Kirsch, whose 30 years of distinguished service at the Fleet Science Center has allowed the Fleet to achieve great success as a national leader in inquiry-based science learning and whose leadership role in dome theater innovation has served not only the Fleet, but also dome theater growth and programming nationally and internationally.
May 11, 2013

On behalf of our fellow trustees and the entire staff of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, we are delighted to welcome you here this evening to celebrate not only the Science Center’s 40th Anniversary but also to pay tribute to retiring Executive Director, Dr. Jeffrey Kirsch.

Forty years ago, a spark ignited our imagination and thanks to a lead gift from the Reuben H. Fleet Family Foundation and the vision and imagination of Preston “Sandy” Fleet, the Science Center was born. Over time the Science Center grew in physical size and expanded its role to encompass not just amazing films, planetarium shows, and hands-on science exhibits but also informal science education and teacher professional development using inquiry-based methods. Today, with a digital planetarium shared with an IMAX® Dome Theater plus our innovative science education programs, the Fleet is poised to launch forward.

We hope you will join us in imagining and creating the future for San Diego’s only science museum. The newly created Innovation Fund (IF) will become the Fleet’s vital resource for dynamic educational experiences, blockbuster scientific exhibitions, and new technology demystified. Your support of IF will ensure that the Fleet expands its critical role in inspiring minds and connecting individuals to science and technology.

Lastly, we would like to thank everyone for your support of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center both tonight and over its forty-year history. Only with the generosity of friends and supporters like you, is it possible for the Fleet to fulfill its mission of being a leader in science and technology education. We also want to extend our thanks to our hardworking committee, staff, and volunteers at the Fleet without whom tonight’s event simply would not be possible. Nor would it be as much fun to plan!

But tonight is not just about the past, it is also about FUN (for those of you that know us), so we invite you to enjoy the party, and raise your glasses in a toast to our beloved retiring Executive Director, Dr. K, our new Executive Director, Steven Snyder, Ph.D. and the future of the Fleet!

Cheers,

Lori Fleet-Martin Nancy Robertson
40th Anniversary Big Bang Gala Chairs
Jeffrey W. Kirsch, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Kirsch received his BSE in Aeronautical Engineering at Princeton University in 1962 and his MSAE in Aerospace Engineering at University of Southern California in 1963. He spent three years launching his career in aerospace engineering research and rocketry, but decided to return to school in 1966 to get his PhDAE in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Southern California, which he achieved in 1969. Dr. Kirsch continued his career for about seven more years until his growing interest in science communications led him to become the Executive Producer and Director of the KPBS-TV Science Center in San Diego for nine years. In 1983, he became the Executive Director of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center and under his leadership, the institution has quintupled its membership (to 14,000 families), doubled its physical size (in 1998 to 95,000 sq. ft.), and is recognized as a major contributor to the use of IMAX films in science museums worldwide and an innovator in inquiry-based science education. Dr. Kirsch is dedicated to creating and maintaining educational environments that promote problem-solving skills and teamwork, recognizing that self-esteem is a vital influence on science understanding by adults as well as children. The Fleet has become the major contributor to informal science education and science literacy for the region. Fleet education programs now reach over 110,000 students per year and it has been awarded a series of multi-year grants from the State of California to train San Diego elementary school teachers in inquiry-based methods for science education.

Dr. Kirsch has been Executive Producer for seven IMAX productions, and consulting producer or advisor on seven other IMAX films, all of which have been featured at other IMAX Dome Theaters. In 2001, he received the Founders Award from IMAX Corporation for individuals who have made a major contribution to the arts and sciences of IMAX films.

Dr. Kirsch was a mayoral appointee to the Balboa Park Committee, and has been very active in the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership (BPCP). He served as founding President in 2002, and later for two other terms, the last ending in 2012. BPCP helps each of the 27 cultural organizations in San Diego’s famous Balboa Park to achieve its full potential through collaborations with the other Park institutions and to advocate for their collective benefit.
TRAY PASSED HORS D’OEUVRES
Curried Chicken Tart with mango chutney
Buffalo Mozzarella & Sun-Dried Tomato Crostini

COLD SPOONS
Rotisserie & Pulled BBQ Chicken with California slaw
Bay Scallop with preserved lemon and artichoke

FIRST COURSE
Fresh California Herb & Bibb/Endive Lettuce Salad Carlsbad strawberries, boursin, radishes, baby tomatoes, chives, spiced pecans, sherry vinaigrette
Fresh Baked La Brea Artisan Breads

ENTRÉE
Short Rib Bistro Steak Diane sour cream-chive Yukon puree, roasted carrots & mushroom trio, broccoli, mustard-green peppercorn cream sauce
or
VEGAN ENTRÉE
Roasted Cauliflower Steak root vegetables, red quinoa

DESSERT STATION
Strawberry Shortcake presented in a martini glass
White & Dark Chocolate Mousse Martini mint chocolate brownie cubes, whipped cream, caramel sauce, candied nut praline

CATERING PROVIDED BY
Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina
Executive Chef, Steve Black

SPECIALTY COFFEE DRINKS PROVIDED BY
Joes on the Nose
TONIGHT’S PROGRAM

6:00 PM
Cocktails, Hors D’oeuvres and Interactive Fun

7:30 PM
Big Bang Dinner
Special Presentation

9:30 PM
Coffee & Dessert
Dancing, Casino
### HONORARY CHAIRS

Joan and Irwin Jacobs

### HONORARY COMMITTEE

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<th>Mark and Alida Bracker</th>
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### GALA CHAIRS

Lori Fleet-Martin
Nancy Robertson

### GALA COMMITTEE

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<th>Amee Alagiri</th>
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<td>Jena Kirsch Joyce</td>
<td>Heather Wilkens</td>
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### STAFF ADVISORS

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<td>Andrea Decker</td>
<td>Debbie Lowery-Cunning</td>
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<td>Wendy Grant</td>
<td>Julie Schardin</td>
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SPECIAL THANKS

The Family of Reuben H. Fleet
For FORTY years of outstanding support!

The Kirsch Family

Mike and Martha McKinnon,
Owners of the Reuben H. Fleet historic mansion in Point Loma

Matt Baylow, Meteorologist, KFMB-TV,
Emcee

Mary Anderson,
Historian

Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina

Velocity Audio Visual

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Casino Magic Parties, LLC

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Eclipse Chocolat®

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Glenn Erath

First Friday Music Club

Joes on the Nose

Raphael’s Party Rentals

Carol Sonstein

Noah Tafolla

The Fabulous Ultratones
It was March 10, 1957 when a group of forward-thinking San Diegans met at the Hotel San Diego. They dreamed of creating a museum of science and industry with a planetarium as the dramatic focal point. They incorporated as the San Diego Hall of Science (later known as the San Diego Space and Science Foundation and now the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center), naming Dr. Glenn Havens as president.

This dynamic group was about to take planetarium technology to new heights. In 1965, two employees of General Dynamics here in San Diego, Dr. Edward Creutz (a nuclear physicist) and James Crooks, Jr. (an electronics engineer), developed and unveiled a model planetarium with a revolutionary new concept: a 76-foot dome tilted at a 25-degree angle down in front of the spectators, who were to be seated in tiered rows all facing forward—to give the illusion of being suspended in space.

Creutz and Crooks formed a planning committee with Preston Fleet, Dr. Bernard Gross and Captain Norval Richardson to turn this new concept into reality. In fact, it was the innovative mind of Preston Fleet, or “Sandy” as his friends and family knew him, who proposed the surround-screen, stadium-style seating and the incorporation of rock-concert quality sound technology. This concept would form the world’s first Omnimax Theater. More importantly, Sandy wanted to enliven the program by combining standard planetarium presentations with visually thrilling documentary films.

By 1969, planning was well underway. The City and County of San Diego established the San Diego Planetarium Authority to oversee the issuance of $3 million worth of revenue bonds to develop and build the Planetarium and Exhibit Galleries.

Reuben Hollis Fleet was a pioneer in American aviation. He won his Army Air Corps wings No. 74 in 1917. In 1918, he was commissioned by President Woodrow Wilson to organize the first airmail service in the United States. In 1923, he...
founded Consolidated Aircraft Company, which he moved from Buffalo, NY to San Diego, CA in 1935. The company built the well-known World War II B-24 “Liberator” bombers and the PBY “Catalina” Flying Boats, both of which materially helped in winning the war.

Major Fleet took an active role in shepherding the nascent museum through the approval process. The Reuben H. Fleet Foundation and members of the Fleet family gave the initial $1 million seed money used to build the infrastructure and provide equipment for the Space Theater and exhibits for the Science Center Galleries. When asked why he chose to make this generous gift, Major Fleet mused, “Perhaps it’s because I think San Diego is the finest city in the world and I wanted to do something worthwhile for it.”

The Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater & Science Center opened to the public on March 10, 1973 on the Prado in Balboa Park, featuring the first Omnimax® Theater in the world. With continuing support from the Fleet Foundation, a multi-million dollar expansion was completed in May of 1998—just two months after the Fleet Center’s 25th anniversary, which tripled the Center’s exhibit space and doubled the size of the facility. The name was changed in May, 1998 to the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center to reflect the balance of expanded activities at the center.

The Fleet Science Center now houses eight exhibit galleries offering a changing array of hands-on science and technology exhibits; the Nierman Challenger Learning Center (a realistic mock-up of Mission Control and a space station); two state-of-the-art classrooms; Kid City, designed for children ages 5 and under; and a multi-purpose space for lectures, classes, and workshops.

The theater, recently renamed as the Eugene Heikoff and Marilyn Jacobs Heikoff Giant Dome Theater, is Southern California’s only Giant Dome Theater, and features the world’s biggest NanoSeam™ Dome screen. It is the first Giant Dome Theater in the country to share a digital planetarium with an IMAX Dome Theater, and provides one of the most comprehensive and powerful full-dome experiences available today.
What **IF** you could see cutting-edge robotics and how they affect you and the world around you?

What **IF** you could investigate the elements of the periodic table and explore virtual compounds?

What **IF** you could make your own movie and see it in the Heikoff Giant Dome Theater?

What **IF** you could experience a new Live Science event on every visit to the Fleet?

The Innovation Fund (IF) can make all of these possible, and more!

· Dynamic Educational Experiences
· Blockbuster Scientific Exhibitions
· New Technology Demystified

The newly established Innovation Fund is the Fleet’s vital resource for developing, growing, and sustaining cutting-edge strategies to inspire lifelong science and technology learning, understanding, and enjoyment in San Diego and beyond. IF will ensure that the Fleet expands its critical role in inspiring minds and connecting individuals to science and technology.
WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

HONORARY CHAIRS
Joan and Irwin Jacobs

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Carol and Jeffrey Chang
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Audrey S. Geisel/Dr. Seuss Fund
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Allison and Robert Price
Neil Senturia and Barbara Bry
John Vaughn and Serena Lee
Frederick Walker and Katharine Sheehan

Denotes Innovation Fund support

EVENT UNDERWRITING
Pam Fair and Glen Sullivan
Welcome Champagne
Eric and Peggy Johnson
Centerpieces & Décor
Deborah Horwitz and Paul Nierman
Souvenir Photos

Miyo and Mitchell Reff
Welcome Red Carpet
Nancy Robertson and Mark Cookingham
Dinner White Wine
Jeff,

Thank you for keeping the “spark” alive and carrying on the vision of our original Founders. You have been a pleasure to work with these past 30 years!

Warmly,
The Reuben H. Fleet Family
To Jeff,
An extraordinary Fleet Champion.

As well as a treasured colleague and dear friend!

With love and best wishes from
Lily Chang, the Fleet mascot and her family
Albert Einstein said,

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.”

Our cousin, Dr. Jeffrey Kirsch made the mysterious accessible to all through his contributions to both art and science.

We are so proud of you and look forward to your accomplishments in your next career!

Joan Kirschenbaum, Phyllis Kirschenbaum, Fran & Richard Etner, Ellen Kubo & Allen Kirschenbaum
Happy Retirement, Dear Jeff and Joy

We are looking forward to many many more Sunday brunches in your retirement!

- Best wishes from Sybil York

Who says, “Men are incapable of giving birth”?  
Jeff, you’ve defied that law of nature, bringing Life to the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center.
You have nurtured it, and seen to it that the necessary sustenance has been provided to meet its growing needs.
This San Diego treasure is a direct result of your parenting skills. Congratulations on a lifetime of achievements and success.

- Bob and Leah Temkin

Dear Jeff, Congratulations on your 30 years of leadership and achievement as Executive Director of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center as well as your many contributions to the San Diego community.

We also value your friendship, sharing of ideas, scientific insights and having lots of fun over the many years.

- With deepest affection, The Book Club

From Ocean Parkway to Outer Space.

It’s been a wonderful journey and we’re glad to have been along for the ride.

If you’ve enjoyed the trip so far, wait til you experience the joys of retirement.

- The Morris Family
“How did I get here?” That was the question the Talking Heads posed for all of us in their impactful song “Once in a Lifetime.” It was very popular in the early 80s, just about the same time I was hired by the Board of the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater and Science Center to be their institution’s third Executive Director. Prior to that I had the joy of working at KPBS-TV with a group of people dedicated to showing how important science and technology were to society. But when the Fleet Board invited me to take a close look at their “Space Theater” (as it was then called), I was blown away by the opportunity. Not long before that I had seen *Living Planet* at the Space Theater, a beautiful film with a global theme and images of our planet that I can still recall. And at KPBS I also had worked on a documentary about the new wave in science education for the youngest students, often referred to as “hands-on” science. The Fleet’s Science Center was 5000 sq. ft. of hands-on science!
So you might be tempted to say the rest was history in terms of my career. But that would not be quite right. To be sure, the stronger attraction was the lure of working on IMAX science films for the dozen or so Giant Screens located on the North American continent. I was charged with making sure the pipeline of IMAX films for our Space Theater would be full in the years ahead.

But when I had the time to observe visitors in the Science Center, I came to a personal realization. It was actually a thrilling experience for me to see how hands-on science worked with our visitors, particularly the children. By combining both the Theater and Science Center experience with Educational Programs for the schools, I became certain the Fleet could be a major factor in the improvement of science education for the City and County of San Diego.

Eventually, over a considerably longer period of time, I learned something else just as important, which is that every part of the Fleet is part of the experience we provide for our visitors. The friendly institutional culture we have at the Fleet is as important as our technologies, our exhibits, and our theatrical attractions. It is what has motivated the Staff, the Board, our Members and Donors, and our Volunteers. The WE is more successful than the ME. So, while I can say it has been a fantastic 30 years, I am excited and delighted that Steve Snyder will be our new Executive Director. He is ready to lead a terrific team of dedicated people, and that will include the Fleet’s newest volunteer, me! The rest will be history.

\(^1\)Once in a Lifetime was named one of the 100 most important American musical works of the 20th century by National Public Radio.
Happy Retirement Jeff.

We know that you will continue to make this world a better place!

- Betty Lubin

With gratitude for all of your contributions and dedication not only to GSCA but to the entire industry. You’re a giant of giant screen cinema. Best wishes to you and Joy on your next adventures.
TRIBUTE PAGES

You are a true pioneer, and it has been an honor working with you. You will be missed!

Best wishes and happy retirement

From all your friends at National Geographic Cinema Ventures

(Mark, Lisa, John, Nikki, Antonietta, Bethany, Shannon, Deborah, Debbie, Lauren, Jo)

“Do not grow old, no matter how long you live. Never cease to stand like curious children before the Great Mystery into which we are born.”
- ALBERT EINSTEIN

“Past time is finite, future time is infinite.”
- EDWIN HUBBLE

Jeff, Many thanks for your stellar work over the years to build the Fleet Science Center into the respected institution that it is today. Your vision, commitment, expertise and focus on collaboration have been at the heart of the Fleet’s success and impact in the community. Many generations will benefit from these opportunities for lifelong learning... As you’ve said, “Fun is learning and learning is fun.” Wishing you wonderful times ahead!

Live Long and Prosper, Pam Fair, Glen and Ted Sullivan
Dear Jeff,

May your accomplishments in retirement be as successful and favorable as those with the Reuben H. Fleet Center.

-Joan and Irwin Jacobs
Jeff,

May you float on the wings of butterflies into retirement

And may you have much JOY!

Thanks for your leadership, wisdom and humour

Jonathan, Wendy and the SK team

SDG&E Salutes Jeff’s 30 Years! On behalf of Jessie Knight, Jr. and the SDG&E family of employees, we thank you for your dedication to the Reuben H. Fleet. Under your leadership, the Fleet has become an iconic science center that provides a fun educational experience for kids and adults alike. The Fleet continues to adopt innovation and inspire visitors, and will forever remain a Balboa Park treasure thanks to you.

Congratulations, Jeff, on 30 STARpendous years. We wish you a retirement with continued cosmic creativity and fun!

L’chaim and love,

Maggie and Paul Meyer

Our enthusiastic congratulations, Jeff, on a successful 30-year tenure at the Fleet. Through your leadership, keen commitment, creative bent and vigor, you have significantly enhanced scientific awareness and knowledge within the San Diego community and beyond. The impact of your work will be felt by young and old and in-between for years to come.

With affection, Susan and Jerry Pollock
in Jeff and Joy Kirsch.

Here’s to the next 40 years.

Thank you Jeff!!!

Imax.com
To Jeff,

Thanks for being the face of the Fleet for all these years. Your vision and leadership has inspired us all.

Take some time to enjoy your retirement, you earned it.

All our best,
Chuck and Judy Wheatley
Gordon and Annika Kovtun salute Jeff’s 30 years of incredible service to make the Fleet the special place that it is today.

Thank you Jeff!!!

Cincinnati Museum Center thanks Jeff for his vision and leadership that has impacted a world of museums and their guests.

The Giant Dome Theater Consortium thanks Jeff for his leadership and support, and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

Museum of Science & Industry, Chicago  Reuben H. Fleet Science Center
Science Museum of Minnesota  Museum of Science, Boston
Cincinnati Museum Center  Saint Louis Science Center  Discovery Place, Charlotte

Congratulations Jeff! –

The GS network got giant because of your leadership, association building and innovation in film production, museum networks, financing and learning impact. You stand at the start and center of the global museum network of giant screen theaters - a foundational contribution to immersive learning.

- Cheers! Jeanie and John, White Oak Associates

The Kirsch/Mettler Group, U.S-Canada Chapter, sends loving wishes to Dr. Kirsch for a happy retirement - and many pleasurable and productive years to come. Kudos!

Sally and Frank, Beth-Anne and Michael, Gaby and Mike, plus Mickey, Coco, Eli and Erika
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