

to the editor

An eager candidate

Having just read the very interesting article on "A Light in an Astronaut's Eye" (SN: 5/30, p. 523), I hasten to point out that the Princeton-Pennsylvania Accelerator (PPA), a 3-billion-electron-volt proton synchrotron, can readily be adapted to the acceleration of heavy ions to high energy. In fact, we have met with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and NASA is considering ways we could serve their biomedical needs.

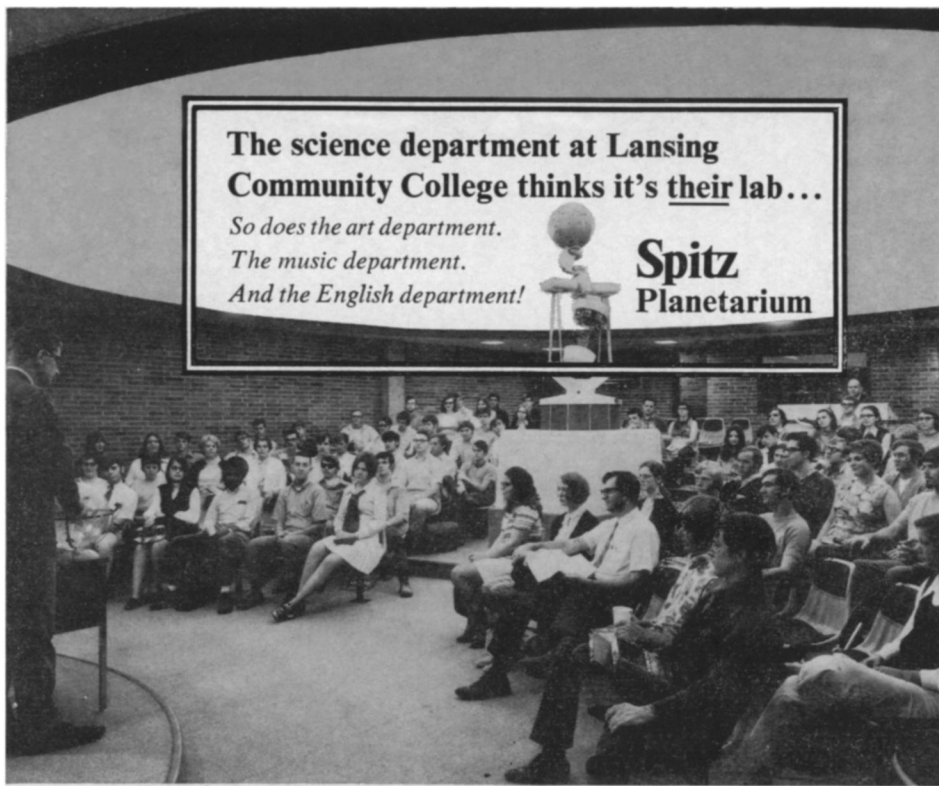
There is no question that the PPA can accelerate heavy ions to the multi-billion-electron-volt range, provided our present epoxy-fiber-glass vacuum chamber is replaced by a ceramic chamber capable of reaching a very good vacuum of 10^{-9} torr. One such chamber, out of the 16 required, is now operating successfully in the synchrotron.

The real problem is one of money. This laboratory was funded by the Atomic Energy Commission at a capital cost of about \$40 million. Now, after only a few years of operation as a proton machine for studies of elementary particles, it is being closed down by the AEC as of June 30, 1971 (SN: 3/7, p. 239). We are seeking funds from every conceivable source to keep the laboratory in operation. In particular we have asked AEC and the National Science Foundation to contribute \$1.0 million per year toward a total of \$1.2 million of which we hope to raise \$200,000 from private sources. About \$85,000 has been pledged to date by the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton University, which jointly manage the laboratory. Since this laboratory is a major high energy research facility for about 15 universities, we hope to raise additional funds from our users. However, the key to our survival lies in getting approximately \$1.0 million in Federal funds.

As matters now stand we have left one year at the \$2.0 million level, to complete commitments to our users. This summer we expect to be accelerating carbon ions to 1.2 GeV per nucleon, or 14.4 GeV total. Hopefully these particles, though not classified as heavy, can cast some light on the light in an astronaut's eye.

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President: Philip J. Gannon / Planetarium Director: Morton E. Mattson / Architect: Warren Holmes Company

The science department at Lansing Community College thinks of the Spitz planetarium as "their" lab. And indeed, the science department has priority. The planetarium is fully integrated with the Astronomy-Geology sections of required freshmen science. Each student works five hours in this controllable universe in miniature.

But the art department thinks of it as "their" lab, the music department as "theirs" and similarly through the other departments.

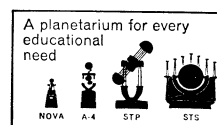
The facility was planned years in advance to be a true media center. The result? A room for exciting student and faculty imagination. A room with full range audial and visual control, with a hemispheric dome for 360 degree overhead projection.

It is a facility in which the Newman Club, for example, presents the Hallelujah Chorus dominating the sound but with pop music woven into the second stereo channel. With flashes of the crucifix interspersed with a play of dynamic colored lights on the dome.

It is a room in which the literature department dramatically recreates the courtroom scene of Weiss' "The Investigation"—with flashes of background scenes projected throughout the hemispheric area.

Lansing Community College schedules their planetarium from 8:00 in the morning until 10:00 at night, 6 days a week. Student-hours in the planetarium totalled 13,016 hours. One semester.

Hundreds of these facilities are in current plans, and the reasons are not hard to find. We will be glad to tell you more about why Lansing Community College President, Mr. Philip J. Gannon, refers to his planetarium as "a room that allows the student's mind to roam as many ways as you can find."



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