

## Music stars to raise funds

### Six local school bands unite for planetarium

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TOMS RIVER — Five hundred musicians from six school bands will be in concert at 7 p.m. tomorrow night at the Ritacco Center to help raise funds to save the Robert J. Novins Planetarium at Ocean County College.

Members of the bands at all three high schools and intermediate schools will perform at the free concert. Volunteers from Save the Planetarium Fund Inc. will be on hand to accept donations.

Those gifts will be matched by a \$50,000 donation from an anonymous donor, according to Richard Gamba, president of Save the Planetarium Fund Inc.

"The kids chose Save the Planetarium Fund Inc. as this year's charity because they really wanted to help the Novins Planetarium," explained Kim Defibaugh, fine arts supervisor at High School South, one of the organizers of the concert.

Tunes from "Star Wars" and "E.T." will be among the music performed by the All-City Orchestra.

Gamba said checks must be noted as intended for the matching gift program. Business donations are excluded from that matching program but can be given to the fund otherwise.

The sponsor is trying to encourage Scout groups, 4-H Clubs, and children's groups at churches and schools to raise money that will be matched.

Gamba said additional sponsors are welcome. Information is available by calling him at (732) 506-7700 or via e-mail at [president@SavethePlanetarium.org](mailto:president@SavethePlanetarium.org).

That fund drive is running in tandem with one launched Friday by the Ocean County College Trustees to fund new equipment for the Novins Planetarium, which could cost as much as \$1.5 million.

The county's freeholders have agreed to refurbish the building that was paid for with a gift from the late Robert J. Novins, a charter trustee of OCC.

The facility was shut a year and a half ago when the state pared funding to the college by \$800,000 and the poor condition of the building, its equipment, and an annual operating deficit moved it to the fiscal chopping block.

Then a donor promised millions to refurbish and operate the facility. Those promises dissolved earlier this year, leading Save the Planetarium to persuade the OCC trustees and the freeholders to invest private and public funds in the planetarium.

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