

# Laser shows light the night at planetarium

■ 'Laser Offspring' and 'Laser Floyd 'The Wall' 2000' show on Friday and Saturday nights



By Monica Hande  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Dancing lasers aren't an everyday sight. But they are a sight to see on Fridays and Saturdays at the Lane Education Service District Planetarium.

This Friday, two new laser shows are opening at the planetarium,

which is located at 2300 Leo Harris Parkway behind Autzen Stadium. "Laser Offspring" will make its appearance in Eugene, and "Laser Floyd 'The Wall' 2000," a revised version of a previous Pink Floyd laser show, will follow.

Pink Floyd has been very popular, said Jon Elvert, the planetarium's director, probably because it appeals to different generations. The audiences are usually of mixed age groups, he said. "Laser Floyd 'The Wall' 2000" is not a new show, he said, but an updated one. He said it incorporates new graphics and technology. Laser shows are about entertainment for all ages, he said.

Basically, he said, a laser show involves images choreographed to music.

There are two components to the creation of a laser show, said Scott Huggins, vice president of the museum and planetarium division of Laser Fantasy International, a company based in Bellevue, Wash., that develops and programs most of the laser shows the Lane ESD Planetarium presents.

"There's the part that we do as artists and technicians before the show," he said, which includes animating and digitizing hand-drawn and computerized designs, much like cartoons. Synthesizers are used to create moving, abstract images, he said, and those images are

then assigned to a soundtrack.

And there's also a live component to a laser show, Huggins said. A technician stands behind the scenes and controls attributes such as size and color.

"They're interpreting the show like an artist," he said.

In a laser show, most visual elements are projected onto the dome of the planetarium, Huggins said, but sometimes lasers are cast from the front of the room to the back, and theatrical fog is used to make the beams more visible.

"The lights and music were choreographed well," said James Powers, a senior biochemistry major, referring to the time he saw "Laser Floyd" a few years ago. "It was

eye-catching and just all-around neat. If I had more time and money, I would go to them a lot more often."

The money required to see a laser show at Lane ESD Planetarium is \$6, and tickets go on sale at 9 p.m. the night of the show. "Laser Offspring" begins at 9:30 p.m., and "Laser Floyd 'The Wall' 2000" begins at 11 p.m. Both shows are featured on Fridays and Saturdays. Most laser shows run for about 45 to 55 minutes, Huggins said.

The show schedule changes about every three months, Elvert said. Occasionally, the planetarium features holiday laser shows, but a Halloween show has not yet been scheduled for this year.

## Wine knowledge not necessarily limited to rich, upper class



**CHEAP ELEGANCE**

TRAVIS GENY

**W**ine: nectar of the gods, beverage of the privileged. A drink reserved for the James

Bonds and Thomas Crowns of the world to impress the ladies.

Acquiring a knowledge of wine is one of those things that people categorize with the things they would like to do someday but just don't have the time or money for, such as visiting the Pyramids or the Louvre. But it doesn't have to be this way, as I hope this on-going column will make clear.

Similar to many people, I regarded wine as an almost mystical thing that was solely the play-thing of the rich. I

always desired to know about this fanciful treat but didn't know where to start or even how.

There is always that one person in every group of friends who has such knowledge and uses it to impress the crowd at dinner when the question comes up — "Which wine goes with this pasta?" This friend just happened to be my roommate.

When I mentioned my desire to attain this holy knowledge, he introduced me to a book about wine. Inside was the secret to what I had

suspected all along: that there really isn't much to knowing about wine and that wine-loving is more a matter of taste than real higher learning, as so many believe.

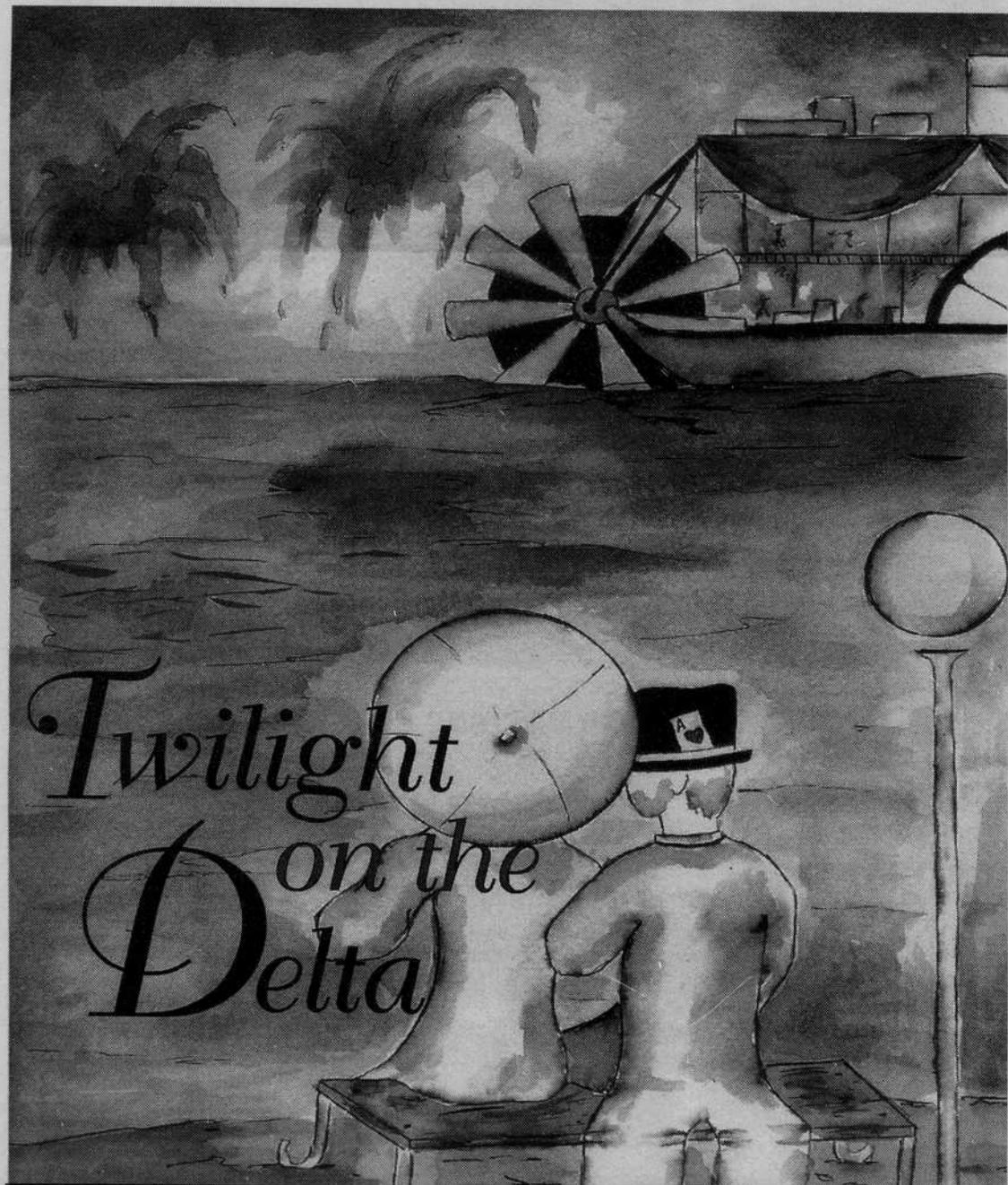
Now, there are those in the world who take wine very seriously, including here in the good old United States. In France, for example, there are very strict laws governing how wine is to be made, what it can be called and so on. There are even government wine tasters who evaluate the quality of wine. Here in the United States, there are also laws that are molded after the French model of governing wine production, most notably in California but in Oregon as well. However, we will be dealing with the much lighter side of enjoying wine.

I will do my best to debunk that myth that only expensive wine is

good wine, and prove that a \$5 bottle of wine cannot only be a bargain but a truly enjoyable and memorable experience. Wines will be presented by region, type, quality and cost. We will explore the many different wine-producing areas of the world, as well as feature local vintners and vineyards. I will also tackle the daunting task of matching certain wines with certain foods. This will be a chance to learn how to better wine and dine your date, or it will teach you to identify a truly delectable wine from a \$2 bottle of red-eye.

Being a college student means cutting costs and living on a budget, yet there is no reason that you shouldn't be able to live richly — without being rich.

Travis Geny's column is written every other week for Pulse.



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