

1. Last year, astronomers at Caltech discovered a 10th planet in our Solar System, about three times as far from the Sun as Pluto. This discovery relied upon a new technique in which very distant objects can be detected by listening for echoes of Stephen Fuselier's voice, which is apparently loud enough to be heard several light years away.

Astronomers are also hoping to enlist Dr. Fuselier's aid in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (or SETI). The SETI Institute was optimistic that contact could soon be made, saying that it has always been our dream to someday talk with intelligent beings from another planet. Now, with Stephen Fuselier's excessively loud voice, that dream can become a reality. The Institute added one note of caution, however, saying "I only hope that Stephen doesn't say anything too offensive that might upset the aliens."

2. NASA's Mars rovers, "Spirit" and "Opportunity", continue to obtain detailed, never-before-seen photos of the red planet. For years now, some observers have been claiming one rocky feature appears to be a scowling, unhappy human face. Thanks to high-resolution ground scans by the Mars rovers, we now know that the scowling face is one that should be familiar from the back row of many scientific meetings, none other than Dr. Bob Strangeway of UCLA.

3. One of the biggest news items of the year was the successful January 2006 launch of the New Horizons mission to Pluto, believed to be the coldest and most hostile planet in our Solar System. The launch was also the occasion of a brief scare, when one of the IMAGE team scientists, Nikolai Ostgaard, turned up missing, and was believed to have hitched a ride on New Horizons to go hiking on Pluto. The scare ended some hours later when it was discovered that Ostgaard had spent the time in question drinking in a bar.

4. Last December, space scientists were saddened by the loss of contact with the IMAGE spacecraft, which had provided almost six years of unprecedented and stunning images of previously invisible regions of Earth's space environment. The IMAGE mission had just completed a very successful Senior Review, in which future funding was linked to National Security in the Post 9/11 Era.

5. The IMAGE team was even more shocked by the discovery that one of its most respected scientists, Dr. Ed Roelof, had for years been concealing a secret identity, none other than millionaire playboy Hugh Hefner. Dr. Roelof has contended that there are a lot of similarities between "chasing truth" and "chasing skirts". With the loss of contact with the IMAGE satellite, Roelof has announced his intention to make the latter pursuit a full-time venture.

6.

The NASA Cassini mission continues its mission of discovery, orbiting the ringed planet Saturn.

???