



GODS OF GEEKDOM

BILL NYE

Known as the Science Guy, Bill Nye is just obscure enough to merit a very respectable geek factor of 7. That's a nice chunk to add to your total if you know who he is, but if you ever actually saw him on a broadcast of *Almost Live*, you can double your score and add 14. And if you ever saw one of his New Year's Eve Rube Goldberg countdown machines, you can take another 7 points. Those are some big numbers, I know, but this one's personal. It was a chance meeting with Bill during a field trip to the Seattle Science Center that was a big part of why I eventually chose a career in research and science. When Bill overheard my teacher tell me that she didn't know why it was important

that the cascade of Ping-Pong balls in the display formed a normal curve, he stepped over and explained some of the fascinating things that could be derived from the math of that curve. And when Bill's producer got annoyed with him for delaying the start of their shoot, Bill very calmly said that he had no choice because "every time you can help a person understand something new, it makes the world a better place." Perhaps most important for a brief section on the science of political science, when Bill was asked if there was anything that would convince him to accept creationism he said, "Yes. Evidence." That, in the tidiest of nutshells, is what science is all about.