



Lake Afton Public Observatory

OR: Immediate Release

FROM: Lake Afton Public Observatory
WSU Fairmount Center for Science and Mathematics Education
Robert Henry, 316.978.3991 or Greg Novacek, 316.978.3854

DATE: June 23, 2014

RE: Lake Afton Public Observatory – New programs for summer, 2014.

Famous Astronomers and Men on the Moon

Earth turns on its axis; stars fuse hydrogen into helium; our galaxy is one of billions in a vast expanding universe. These are all things we learn in school, but who were the amazing men and women who discovered them? Find out while using a large telescope to observe objects such as Saturn (through 9/13), a multiple star system, a cluster of stars, a planetary nebula, and a distant galaxy. *“Famous Astronomers”* will be presented on Friday and Saturday evenings of July 18-19, and 25-26; August 15-16, 22-23, and 29-30 and September 12-13, 19-20 and 26.

Commemorate the 45th anniversary of the first manned lunar mission when Neil Armstrong and “Buzz” Aldrin in the Eagle Lunar Lander touched down on the Moon’s surface on July 20, 1969. Come out to the Lake Afton Public Observatory to look through the 16-inch telescope at some of the six Apollo landing areas. Then look to the future by observing Saturn and speculate what a trip to the outer reaches of our solar system might be like. *“Apollo to the Moon”* will be presented on July. 5, and 11-12; August 1-2, and 8-9; and September 5-6

The Lake Afton Public Observatory has numerous exhibits that complement the observing programs. One exhibit examines the amazing but little-known women in astronomy and their achievements. Another exhibit reveals some of the many astounding discoveries made by the Hubble Space Telescope. You can also learn interesting facts about the Apollo lunar missions. Other exhibits show you how to make a telescope, or test your astronomy knowledge to launch the Space Shuttle. You can also use small telescopes and binoculars outside to observe astronomical objects on your own.

Office:
1845 Fairmount
Wichita, KS 67260-0032
(316) 978-3191

Program Information:
(316) WSU-STAR
Internet:
<http://webs.wichita.edu/lapo>

Observatory:
20 mi. SW of downtown Wichita
on MacArthur Rd. at 247th St. W.
(316) 794-8995

The Observatory also features a photography program each month where anyone with a 35mm single-lens reflex camera (that's a camera with a removable lens) can take celestial photographs using the Observatory's telescope as a giant telephoto lens. At 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 12th the photography program will feature the beautiful ringed planet Saturn. Then at 11:00 pm on Saturday, August 23rd, the photography program will feature a giant cluster of almost a million stars in our galaxy called M13. Finally, on Saturday, September 20th at 10:00 p.m. the astrophotography program will focus its attentions on a beautiful binary star system called Beta Cygni.

Please note that for these astrophotography programs your SLR camera must have a manual override and you should be familiar with using its manual settings such as changing ISO and exposure settings. For all astrophotography programs a cable release is recommended.

But wait! What if you don't have a 35mm SLR camera? The Observatory has a solution ... just bring a USB flash drive to the Observatory. The Observatory staff will help you use the Observatory's camera to take your pictures. Your pictures will then be transferred to your flash drive for you to take home, process and enjoy.

Opening Times and Admission

The Lake Afton Public Observatory is open to the public every Friday and Saturday evening. However, on Friday, July 4 the Observatory will be closed in observance of Independence Day and will reopen the following day, Saturday, July 5. From July through the end of August, Observatory hours are from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. Then, in September, Observatory hours change and they will be from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Admission to the Observatory is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children ages 6-12; children under 6 are admitted free. There is also a special family rate where 2 adults and their immediate minor children or grandchildren get in for just \$15.00. For program information, you can "friend" the Lake Afton Public Observatory on Facebook, call the information hotline at WSU-STAR (978-7827), or go to the Observatory's website at <http://webs.wichita.edu/lapo>

Location

The Observatory is located about 20 miles southwest of downtown Wichita on MacArthur Road at 247th Street West in Lake Afton County Park. It is immediately north of the lake, just off MacArthur Road. Lake Afton can be reached by any of the following routes: west from Wichita on U.S. 54 to the Lake Afton sign at Viola Road three miles past Goddard, then three miles south and one mile east; or southwest on K-42, 7 miles to Schulte and nine miles west on MacArthur.

Events Taking Place in the Sky

Would you like to know when full moon will occur? Have you ever pondered the name of the bright star you saw near the moon? Is there a meteor shower this month? To discover the answers to these questions or if you just want to know what events are taking place in the sky during the current month call the Observatory's Program and Sky Information line at WSU-STAR (978-7827).

The Lake Afton Public Observatory is operated by the Fairmount Center for Science and Mathematics Education, a part of the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Science at Wichita State University.

Lake Afton Public Observatory Public Program Schedule July – September, 2014

Program	July	Fridays and Saturdays
CLOSED		July 4
<i>Apollo to the Moon</i>	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	July 5, 11-12
Photography: Saturn	11:00 p.m.	Saturday, July 12
Bring Your Own Telescope	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	Friday, July 18
<i>Famous Astronomers</i>	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	July 18-19, 25-26
Program	August	Fridays and Saturdays
<i>Apollo to the Moon</i>	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	August 1-2, 8-9
Bring Your Own Telescope	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	Friday, August 15
<i>Famous Astronomers</i>	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	August 15-16, 22-23, 29-30
Photography: M13	11:00 p.m.	Saturday, August 23
Program	September	Fridays and Saturdays
<i>Apollo to the Moon</i>	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	September 5-6
Grandparents' Day Weekend	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	Fri. & Sat. September 5-6
<i>Famous Astronomers</i>	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	September 12-13, 19-20, 26
Photography: Beta Cygni	10:00 p.m.	Saturday, September 20
Smithsonian Magazine Museum Day	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	Saturday, September 27

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