



Lake Afton Public Observatory

2012 Public Programs



Observatory Hours

The Observatory is open to the public on Friday and Saturday evenings. Observing through the telescope begins shortly after the doors open. Public program times are given below, but please note that they are subject to change. Call 316-WSU-STAR (316-978-7827) for information on specific programs and times.

January 3 - February 29	7:30-10:00 p.m.
March 1 - 31	8:00-10:00 p.m.
April 1 - 30	8:30-10:30 p.m.
May 1 - September 1	9:00-11:00 p.m.
September 2 - 30	8:00-10:00 p.m.
October 1 - December 22	7:30-10:00 p.m.
December 23 - January 1	CLOSED

Program Cancellations

An Observatory program will automatically be canceled if there is a severe thunderstorm warning or tornado warning anywhere in Sedgwick County during the hour prior to the start of a program. Programs will also be canceled if travel conditions are hazardous. If possible, the recorded program information at 316-WSU-STAR will be changed to reflect program cancellations.

Admission

Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under the age of 6. We also have a family rate of \$15.00 for Mom, Dad and all their immediate minor children. (Please note that we cannot accept credit and debit cards.) Reservations are not necessary. Call 316-978-3191 during normal office hours for group rates. Admission charges, program times, and program topics are subject to change. Call 316-WSU-STAR (316-978-7827) for current program information.

Public Programs

Each program consists of observing three to five objects through the Observatory's 16-inch telescope. These objects are chosen with a particular theme that ties them together. Of course if it is cloudy the program objects cannot be seen, although the Observatory's exhibits and displays are available.

From the Moon to the Stars

January 6-7, 27-28
February 3-4, 24-25

Visitors will use the observatory's big telescope to take a visual journey to the stars. It all starts with observations of the craters and smooth plains of our nearest neighbor, the Moon. The next stop will be the planet Venus (in February) and then out to Jupiter. The journey will end with a view of a distant supergiant star.

Women in Astronomy

January 13-14, 20-21
February 10-11, 17-18

The "typical" astronomer is usually portrayed as a man. However, women have been making important, direct contributions to astronomy for centuries. Today, a significant number of astronomers are women. Hear about the achievements of selected women astronomers while viewing some of the many celestial objects they studied. During this program we will observe Jupiter, a giant blue star, a supernova remnant, a nebulae and a spiral galaxy.

Volcanoes in our Solar System

March 2-3, 30-31
April 27-28
May 4-5, 25-26

Here on Earth, volcanoes develop as large cone-shaped mountains and typically spew molten rock from central calderas. But where else in our solar system do we find volcanoes and what forms do they take on other planetary bodies? During this program we will be observing the Moon, Mars, Venus and Saturn (beginning April 27)

Stars and Mars

March 9-10, 16-17, 23-24
April 6-7, 13-14, 20-21
May 11-12, 18-19

Mars will be well placed for viewing this spring so join us at the Observatory to gaze at it through our big telescopes. We will also be observing a double star, an ancient cluster of stars and a distant spiral galaxy.

Sizing Up Saturn

June 1-2, 22-23, 29-30
July 27-28
August 24-25, 31-Sept 1

Saturn is a wonder to behold through a telescope. It, along with the craters and smooth plains of our nearest neighbor, the Moon and a distant star with its own planets will be featured in this program. As you observe them through our big telescope, we will compare and contrast their sizes, composition and features.

Messier Album

June 8-9, 15-16
July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21
August 3-4, 10-11, 17-18

The late 18th century comet hunter, Charles Messier catalogued over 100 objects that could be mistaken for comets when seen through a small telescope. This program features some of these clouds of gas, star clusters, and a galaxy. We will also observe Saturn and a supergiant star.

Universe of the 1920's

Our universe was perceived very differently in the 1920's than it is today. Join us as we observe various astronomical objects through our big telescope and discuss some of the discoveries made over the last century that have altered our perception of the universe.

Deep Sky Nights:

September 7-8, 14-15
October 5-6, 12-13
November 2-3, 9-10, 16-17
December 7-8, 14-15

Moon & Planet Nights:

September 21-22, 28-29
October 19-20, 26-27
November 23-24, 30
December 1, 21-22

During the Deep Sky programs we will look at a multiple star, a planetary nebula, clusters of stars, a "nearby" galaxy and Jupiter (beginning in November).

The Moon and Planets program will feature the craters and smooth plains of our Moon, Uranus, and Jupiter (beginning in November).

Observatory programs are subject to change. Call 316-978-7827 to confirm dates and times.

Photography Programs

Have you ever wanted to take astronomical photographs of the planets, Moon, or stars? If so, join us for our special photography programs.

Bring your 35 mm single-lens reflex camera (the type with a removable lens) to take astronomical photographs using the Observatory's telescope. *[Note that automatic 35 mm cameras without a manual override cannot be used to take astronomical photos.]*

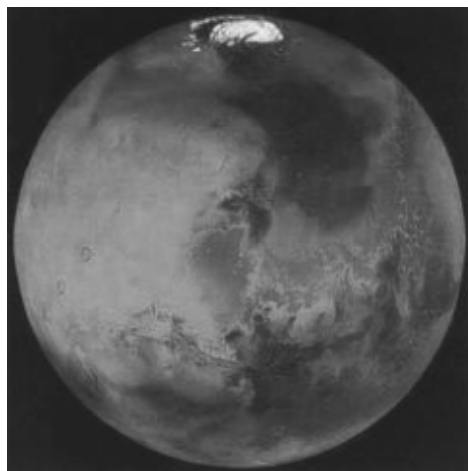
If you do not have the proper camera, bring a USB flash drive instead. We will allow you to use the Observatory's digital SLR to take your pictures, and then transfer them to your flash drive for you to take home and print.

Object Time and Date

Venus	6:00 p.m., Jan. 21
Mars	10:00 p.m., Feb. 25
Mars	10:00 p.m., Mar. 3
First Quarter Moon	10:30 p.m., Apr. 28
Saturn	11:00 p.m., May 19
Gibbous Moon	11:00 p.m., Jun. 30
Saturn	11:00 p.m., Jul. 14
First Quarter Moon	11:00 p.m., Aug. 25
Full Moon	10:00 p.m., Sep. 29
Andromeda (M31) ¹	10:00 p.m., Oct. 13
Crescent Moon	6:00 p.m., Nov. 17
Jupiter	10:00 p.m., Dec. 1

¹ISO 800 or faster speed film, **telephoto lens**, and cable release are required.

For all other programs ISO 400 or 800 color film and a cable release are recommended.



Hubble Space Telescope picture of Mars

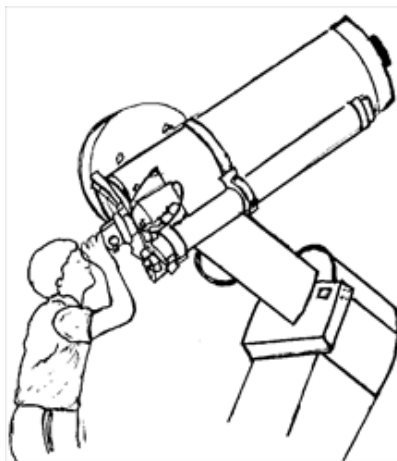
Exhibits

Only part of the world of astronomy can be seen through a telescope. Satellites bring us close-up views of distant planets and their moons. Computers help astronomers unravel the lives of stars. These ideas and more are brought down to Earth by the Observatory's interactive exhibits and displays.

You can make your own telescope, travel through the solar system on a scavenger hunt, explore the properties of light, examine rocks from both Mars and the Moon, learn to use a small telescope and much, much, more.

School Programs

Tuesday and Thursday evenings as well as Wednesday mornings and afternoons are available for school groups by reservation only. For information about school programs, school resource materials, or making a reservation, contact the Observatory office at 316- 978-3191 during normal business hours.



Cloudy Night Activities

It is a fact of life that there will be cloudy nights. While the telescope can't see through clouds, there is still much to do at the Observatory. You can:

- receive a tour of the telescope and an explanation of how it works,
- use a computer to view images of objects you would have seen that evening had it been clear and to discover how those objects are related,
- explore the Observatory's hands-on astronomy exhibits.

Current Sky Information

For information on events taking place in the sky call 316-WSU-STAR and choose option number six.

Contact Us

Program information can be found at:

316-WSU-STAR
(316-978-7827)

For inquiries and reservations call:

316-978-3191

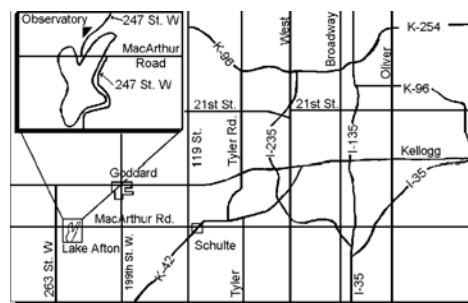
during normal office hours

Our Internet address is:

www.wichita.edu/lapo

Location

The Observatory is located approximately twenty 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 MacArthur; west from Wichita on U.S. 54 to 199th St. West in Goddard, then south three miles to MacArthur and then three miles west; or southwest on K-42 to the stoplight at MacArthur Road and then nine miles west (turn right) on MacArthur



Notice of Nondiscrimination

Wichita State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Director, Office of Affirmative Action, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0145; telephone 316- 978-3371.

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The Lake Afton Public Observatory is supported primarily by Wichita State University and operated by the WSU Fairmount Center for Science and Mathematics Education. Additional support is provided by Sedgwick County.