



Lake Afton Public Observatory

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FOR: 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: August 20, 2012

RE: Lake Afton Public Observatory - Programs for September through December, 2012.

### **What We Thought We Knew in the 1920's**

In the 1920s, our universe was perceived very differently than it is today. Visit the Lake Afton Public Observatory this fall for their *Universe of the 1920's* programs. You will get to observe various astronomical objects through their big telescope and learn what astronomers thought they knew about these objects in the 1920's and what we have learned since that has altered our perception of the universe we live in.

During the *Universe of the 1920's – Moon & Planets* programs, Observatory visitors will view the Moon's craters and maré, Uranus, a multiple star system, and beginning in November, Jupiter through the big 16-inch telescope. The *Moon & Planets* version of the program will be presented on Friday and Saturday evenings, September 21-22, 28; October 19-20, 26-27; November 23-24, 30-Dec 1; and December 21-22.

The *Universe of the 1920's – Deep Sky* programs will observe dim, deep sky objects that can't be seen when the moon makes the sky too bright. During this program, Observatory visitors get to look at a multiple star systems, clouds of gas and dust called nebulae, vast clusters of stars, and even a distant galaxy. Beginning in November, Jupiter will also be featured. The *Deep Sky* programs will be presented on Friday and Saturday evenings, September 7-8, 14-15; October 5-6, 12-13; November 2-3, 9-10, 16-17; and December 7-8 and 14-15.

In addition to the observing programs, the Observatory also has many exhibits for you to explore. You will be amazed at the economic rewards that have come directly from the space program. You can learn more about what astronomers thought they knew about the universe in the 1920's and compare that with what we know today. Or maybe you would like to find out what we know about Jupiter now. Other Observatory exhibits give you an opportunity to: discover the properties of light; touch rocks that came from space; and use a computer to go on a scavenger hunt through the solar system, or land a spacecraft on the Moon. You can also go outside to learn how to use a small telescope or binoculars to explore the night sky on your own.

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**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

Are you interested in taking photographs of astronomical objects? Once a month, on a Saturday evening, the Observatory features an astrophotography program. During these programs, anyone with a 35mm single-lens reflex (SLR) camera (a camera with a removable lens) can take celestial photographs using the Observatory's telescope. If you don't have a camera, bring a USB flash drive and use the Observatory's camera to take your pictures. They will be transferred to your flash drive for you to take home and enjoy.

On Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 pm the astrophotography program will feature the first quarter Moon. The crescent moon will be the camera's subject at 6:00 p.m., on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 p.m., photographs of the giant gas planet, Jupiter will be taken. For the Moon and Jupiter programs the ability to shoot color pictures at ISO 400 or 800 and a cable release are recommended.

On Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 pm, you will photograph the Andromeda galaxy. For this program a telephoto lens, the ability to shoot at ISO 800 or faster, and a cable release are necessary.

### **Opening Times and Admission**

The Lake Afton Public Observatory is open to the public Friday and Saturday evenings. During September, the Observatory will be open from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Then, from October through December 22<sup>nd</sup>, Observatory hours will be from 7:30 pm to 10:00 pm. Admission is just \$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 parents and their immediate minor children or grandchildren get in for just \$15.00. The Observatory will be closed from December 23 through January 1. Current program information is available on our information hotline at WSU-STAR (978-7827) or from our website at <http://webs.wichita.edu/lapo> or you may want to "friend" the Lake Afton Public Observatory on facebook.

### **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 the 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's going on in the sky this month, call the Observatory's Program and Sky Information hotline 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.

## Public Program Schedule September 2 – December 22, 2012

<b>Program</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Fridays and Saturdays</b>
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Deep Sky</i>	8:00 – 10:00 pm	September 7-8, 14-15
Grandparents Day Weekend	8:00 – 10:00 pm	September 7-8
Native American Storytelling	8:30 – 10:00 pm	Saturday, September 15
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Moon &amp; Planets</i>	8:00 – 10:00 pm	September 21-22, 28
Photography: First Quarter Moon	10:00 pm	Saturday, September 22
Smithsonian Magazine Museum Day	8:00 – 10:00 pm	Saturday, September 29
<b>Program</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>Fridays and Saturdays</b>
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Deep Sky</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	October 5-6, 12-13
Photography: Andromeda Galaxy	10:00 pm	Saturday, October 13
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Moon &amp; Planets</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	October 19-20, 26-27
Astronomy Day 2012	3:00 – 10:00 pm	Saturday, October 20
<b>Program</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>Fridays and Saturdays</b>
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Deep Sky</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	November 2-3, 9-10, 16-17
Photography: Crescent Moon	6:00 pm	Saturday, November 17
KAO Telescope Fair	7:30 pm	Saturday, November 17
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Moon &amp; Planets</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	November 23-24, 30
<b>Program</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>Fridays and Saturdays</b>
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Moon &amp; Planets</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	December 1, 21-22
Photography: Jupiter	10:00 pm	Saturday, December 1
<i>Universe of the 1920's – Deep Sky</i>	7:30 – 10:00 pm	December 7-8, 14-15
<b>CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS</b>		<b>December 23 – January 1</b>