I am retiring from the Cincinnati Observatory Board of Trustees after the May Annual Meeting. It has been a pleasure working with the Board to accomplish so much to make the observatory a respected National Historic Landmark, local historic site, and astronomy education center.

While improving every aspect of our mission, the COC has a long list of accomplishments. The top ten on my list are:

1. We have a refreshed operating agreement with the University of Cincinnati that has renewed and enhanced our relationship.
2. The Board Directed Fund is growing in value to ensure the long-term future of the Observatory.
3. New programming has been implemented that engages our members and guests while supporting the stewardship responsibilities of our National Historic Landmark.
4. We have implemented new management and fiscal practices to better inform the Board.
5. We are taking care of our employees in many ways that include: The addition of a funded retirement plan and health insurance plan and salary increases and bonuses that have outpaced cost of living and national salary increase averages.
6. We merged the Cincinnati Observatory with the Friends of the Observatory (FOTO), a separate 501(c)(3).
7. An increase in COC/FOTO memberships that also generates an expanded volunteer pool.
8. Increased income from grants and gifts to support strategic programming and the maintenance of our historic buildings.
9. The implementation of innovative fund-raising programs like Celestial Sips and the Valentines Event.
10. Increased involvement of the Board of Trustees in COC committees and operations.

It has been a pleasure serving the Board for the past 12 years. There are many new challenges to come and I am confident that the COC will meet those challenges and thrive through the leadership of the newly elected Board.

Michael Flick, Ph.D.
BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Observatory Members,
Donors and Volunteers,
2018 was an amazing year. Last November we celebrated the 175th anniversary of John Quincy Adams dedicating the original observatory on the hilltop that ever after bears his name. To bring us to that milestone we owe great thanks to a host of people, many who couldn’t join us that night, and sadly some who are no longer with us.

A huge thanks to Development Director Anna Hehman for all her efforts to make the celebration a spectacular night! Thanks to the Observatory staff and volunteers for all their many hours of help, especially as the event drew nearer. The Monastery Event Center—what a great venue and it was so special to be next door to our original site. The University of Cincinnati. Xavier University. All our many treasured sponsors and donors. And thanks to the Museum & History Committee members and docents. They made a deep-dive into the founding of Cincinnati’s observatory and uncovered some great new stories that they are eager to share with you next time you visit the Observatory. And all of this took place on top of all our K-12 and public programming and events.

The Cincinnati Observatory has benefited from generous direct and in-kind support over many years. In 2018 the Observatory received its largest single donation ever. The one-million dollar gift will enable the Observatory to do many of the things we’ve only dreamed of in capital, operational and programmatic areas. The gift also exemplifies the tremendous faith and confidence that all our donors place in the Observatory, our positive role in preservation, science education, and history - locally as well as at the state and national level.

Thanks again for all you do in support this historic Observatory and its mission!

Craig Niemi
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
The Observatory celebrated a milestone on November 9, 2018 - 175 years since the laying of our cornerstone! To commemorate this event, we held a celebration on Thursday, November 8 at the Monastery Event Center, which was built on the site of the original Observatory. The evening sold out, with over 250 Observatory donors, members, volunteers, Board, and community supporters in attendance at an event that included a presentation from Historian Dan Hurley and WKRC Anchor John Lomax emceed the event.

The celebration netted more than $40,000 to support Observatory programs and work.

We'd like to thank our 175th Celebration sponsors for helping us commemorate this milestone so successfully:

Bahl & Gaynor
Formidable Asset Management
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Roehr Insurance
Xavier University
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TABLE SPONSORS
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The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr.
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MITCHEL SOCIETY DONORS

The support of donors enables the Observatory to offer the programs we do. In 2018, the following individuals joined our Mitchel Society by giving a gift of $500 or more. The Mitchel Society was named for our founder, Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel.

SUN LEVEL ($1000+)
David & Mary Adams
Bud and Joan Baily
John Barnes
Mark and Joan Erhardt
Mike and Jeanine Flick
Marilyn Herget
Linda Huffenberger
Lisa and Steve Lemen
Lyn Marsteller and John Pinney
Graham Edwin and Sharon Janosik / Mitchell Foundation
Terry and Rosemary Powell
Juan Santamarina and Ann Schwister
Michael and Marilyn Shore
Elizabeth Stone
George and Linda Strietmann
Joe and Darlene Verkamp

MOON LEVEL ($500-$999)
Mark & Wendy Armstrong
John Blasing
William Y. Cartwright
Mark & Vicki Plano Clark
Jeff & Mary Dobranski
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Mary Sullivan and Dr. Raymond Schultz
Gary and Nancy Strassel
Chuck and Lisa Strubbe
Amy Summerville and Mike Wolfram

Thank You to the following Foundations and Organizations who support our work and mission. Without their investment, we would not be able to provide such transformative programs to students across the tri-state.

William P. Anderson Foundation
Charles H. Dater Foundation
Thomas J. Emery Memorial
Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile Jr./ US Bank Foundation
Louis and Louise Nippert Trust
Robert H. Reakirt Foundation
Skyler Foundation
Xavier University
University of Cincinnati

OBSERVATORY HONORED WITH $1,000,000 GIFT

In June 2018, the Observatory received an anonymous $1,000,000 donation. Dubbed ‘The Anniversary gift’ by the Observatory staff and board, this gift will be transformative as the Observatory enters the next 175 years! The gift will enable the Observatory to work on projects and needs that we have not previously been able to do. We are looking forward to the impactful work this investment will make possible!

NUMBERS SERVED

11,205 SCHOOLKIDS SERVED THROUGH OUR YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM
INCLUDING 5,268 UNDERSERVED STUDENTS SERVED UP FROM 4,216 IN 2017! A 25% INCREASE!

283 SCHOOL PROGRAMS
797 TOTAL PROGRAMS GIVEN
34,590 PEOPLE SERVED TOTAL

INCOME $1,495,321 EXPENSES $645,682 NET $849,639
OBSERVATORY ADDS TWO PART TIME EDUCATORS

This year we welcomed two new part-time educators, Nicole Capella and Natalia Tooley to support our Youth Outreach work. Nicole uses her Master of Arts in Philosophy to use teaching at Thomas More University, as well as Gateway Technical and Community College. Natalia has a strong background in environmental education, including a degree in Environmental Science. She also has experience working with audiences of all ages as a Program Educator with Metro Parks of Butler County. Nicole and Natalia are putting their skills to use for the Observatory teaching programs at schools, libraries, and community centers. Additionally, they lead captivating programs at the Observatory to school children, scouts and the public. We’re so glad to have them on board!

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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OBSERVATORY STAFF AND KEY VOLUNTEERS

Craig Niemi, Executive Director
Dean Regas, Outreach Astronomer
Anna Hehman, Development Director
Samantha Pepper, Education Manager
Kelsey Stryffe, Administrative Assistant & Docent

Nicole Capella, Outreach Educator
Natalia Tooley, Outreach Educator
John Ventre, Volunteer Historian
Dr. Richard Davis, Volunteer Curator

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