Upcoming Events
February Calendar

Astronomy Thursday  Feb 2  7p
Astronomy Friday    Feb 3  7p
Member’s Family Night  Feb 4  7p
Late Night Date Night Feb 4 10:30p
Behind the Scenes    Feb 6  7p
Astro Topics with Dean Feb 7  7p
Brother Guy @ Athenaeum Feb 8  7:30p
Astronomy Thursday    Feb 9  7p
Astronomy Friday      Feb 10  7p
History of the Observatory  Feb 12  7p
FOTO Member’s Meeting  Feb 13  7:30p
FOTO Planning Meeting  Feb 16  7p
Astronomy Thursday    Feb 16  7p
Astronomy Friday      Feb 17  7p
NEW! Cosmic Kids  Feb 18 am*
Stonelick Stargazing  Feb 18 dusk
Late Night Date Night  SOLD OUT
A2Z+ Astronomy       Feb 19  7p
Eclipse Planning Meeting  Feb 20  7p
Constellations        Feb 21  7p
Astrophysics 101      Feb 22  7p
Astronomy Thursday    Feb 23  7p
Astronomy Friday      Feb 24  7p
Stonelick Stargazing  Feb 25 dusk
Late Night Date Night  Feb 25 10:30p
Tour the Observatory  Feb 26 1-4p
Astro Topics with Dean Mar 7  7p
Baseball on the Planets Mar 11  6p
Intro Astronomy w/ Dean Mar 15, 22, 29
NEW! Cosmic Kids  Mar 18 am*
*See the full article for all the details
Complete Calendar & Events Online

May 6  Jupiter Night
June 11  Sunday Sun-day Sundae
July 29  Saturday
Aug 5  Saturday 2
Aug 21  Total Solar Eclipse
Sept 23  ScopeOut/Great Outdoor Weekend.

Membership News

By Valerie Niemi,
Chair, (aka the Queen of Outer Space)

Hello fellow Stargazers!

The FOTO elections have come and gone and with it come some changes. Michelle Lierl Gainey, who has served so tirelessly as our President for the past three years, will be taking it easy (??) as she becomes our new Secretary. Michelle, we thank you so much for all your hard work. Rest assured, it has been much appreciated.

We also want to thank Anne Schmid and Frank Huss for their time and efforts as FOTO board members. Along with their board work, both Anne and Frank have spent many hours as volunteers at various FOTO and COC events. While we know we can count on Frank to stay active with us, we hear Anne is off to new adventures and wish her well.

It’s only February, but already many of us are eagerly anticipating the August Solar Eclipse. Tom East will be organizing an Eclipse Meeting on Monday, February 20, 7pm, and welcomes your input.

For those who won’t be heading out of town, Terry Endres will be manning telescopes at Cincinnati State and will be happy to have some help.

The next FOTO planning meeting will be Thursday, February 16 at 7pm in the west wing of the Herget Building.

I look forward to seeing you all at the FOTO meeting Monday, Feb 13. Be sure to bring your chip covers as we learn all about the Messier objects while playing Messier Marathon Bingo!

As always, thanks for all your support of the Cincinnati Observatory!
FOTO Officer Election Results

By Dave Bosse

All precincts have reported in and the results of the 2017 FOTO Officer elections have been certified. All four offices of Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, having just one nominee each, were approved by voice acclamation. Each of these officer positions are held for one-year terms.

Congratulations to the new FOTO officers:
Chair – Valerie Niemi
Vice-chair – John Blasing
Secretary – Michelle Lierl Gainey
Treasurer – Al Scheide

One of the three FOTO trustee positions on the Cincinnati Observatory Center Board of Trustees was also up for election with two nominees: the incumbent Terry Endres and former FOTO COC Representative Frank Huss. Terry did win the popular vote and will begin a three-year term continuing as a FOTO COC Representative.

Congratulations to Terry. Thanks to the former officers for their service and some of them for continuing in their service to the Observatory.

Lifelong Learning

Behind the Scenes
Mon. February 6th 7pm

Constellations of the Season
Tues. February 21st 7pm

Astrophysics for the Layperson
Wed. February 22nd 7pm

$29 per person. Sign up online.

FOTO’s February Meeting

By Tom East

Join us on Monday, February 13, 2017, at 7:30 PM for some astronomy fun as we play Messier Bingo. Each year from roughly mid-March to early April, amateur astronomers around the world test their skills by trying to complete the Messier Marathon, an all-night attempt to view each of the Messier Objects before the rising sun makes them vanish.

Messier Bingo is a fun way to brush up on the Messier Objects without staying up all night. As an added bonus, there will be prizes awarded. So if you are a little rusty, pull out your books and charts, or go online to learn more about the Messier Objects and come to the February meeting ready for a fun evening of astronomical proportions!

Brother Guy

Wed. February 8th 7:30pm

Br. Guy Consolmagno, S.J., Director of the Vatican Observatory, will speak on faith and science. The talk will be held in the Bartlett Pastoral Center on the campus of the Athenaeum of Ohio. 6616 Beechmont Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45230.

A native of Detroit, he earned undergraduate and masters’ degrees from MIT, and a Ph.D. in Planetary Science from the University of Arizona. He was a postdoctoral research fellow at Harvard and MIT before entering the Society of Jesus in 1989.

He has worked at the Vatican Observatory since 1993. There his research has explored connections between meteorites, asteroids, and the evolution of small solar system bodies.

Along with more than 200 scientific publications, he is the author of a number of popular books including Would You Baptize an Extraterrestrial?

The talk is free and open to the public. Seating is Limited.

Did You Know...

The Sun consumes 4 million tons of matter EACH SECOND.
Highlights of the January 9th FOTO Meeting

By Michelle Lierl Gainey, Secretary

At the meeting of January 9, 2017, elections were held for the FOTO Committee officer positions. The officers for 2017 are: Valerie Niemi, Chair; John Blasing, Vice Chair; Michelle Lierl Gainey, Secretary; and Al Scheide, Treasurer. The new FOTO Representative to the COC Board is Terry Endres, elected for a 3 year term.

The other two representatives to the COC Board are JoAnne Pedersen (term ends 1/2018) and Dave Bosse (term ends 1/2019).

The presentation was given by Terry Endres, an excellent update on dwarf planets.

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2017 Observatory Calendars

The 2017 Observatory calendars are here! This year we did a community-wide call for photographers and the calendar is filled with pictures of not only gorgeous astrophotography, but our beautiful buildings and grounds as well. The calendars are available in the Observatory Gift Shop and a beautiful addition to any home or office!

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Observatory Historical Notes

Observatory Invited in 1843 to Form New University

By John Ventre, COC Historian

Professor Mitchel stated to the Cincinnati Observatory Board that a meeting has been planned with the Trustees of the Cincinnati College, the Woodward College and the Hughes School. The Trustees were going to determine what preliminary steps can be taken toward joining these institutions together with the Cincinnati Astronomical Society to form a new University.

Mitchel also reported that he received a communication from Professor Airy, the Astronomer Royal of the Greenwich Observatory, recommending the type of astronomical observations that he could conduct at his new Observatory, probably with great success, in order to increase astronomical knowledge.

Principal Source: Minutes of the Cincinnati Astronomical Society, Board of Control, December 16, 1843.

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Aug. 21, 2017 Eclipse Planning

The Cincinnati Observatory Center, Friends of the Observatory, and the Cincinnati Astronomical Society are making plans to travel to the centerline to observe the Total Solar Eclipse. If you are interested in making this trip, now is the time to contact the Cincinnati Observatory to add your name to the list.

At this stage, we are searching out observing sites and lodging near the centerline path in the Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee area. This is the closest the path will pass to the Cincinnati area.

From these states, the eclipse will happen during the mid-day hours. Lodging is being considered for Sunday night.

A questionnaire is available from the Cincinnati Observatory Center to gather information on what you would like to do. Please complete this survey promptly and return it to the Observatory.

This is your chance to travel along with your friends to see Nature’s Greatest Event!

For more information, contact Tom East, Eclipse Chairperson, at animastra@gmail.
Development Update

By Anna Hehman

As we begin a new year, this is a reminder that your membership dues are entirely tax deductible. Also, if you work at a company that will do matching gifts, your membership donation qualifies! Please ask your employer if they have a matching gift program. This year we will also be sending a follow up to membership renewals with an email link to renew your membership online!

Additionally, with some memberships we may be asking members to increase their gift to the Observatory as we look to grow our membership donation revenue and we hope you’ll actively recruit friends and family to also support the Observatory with a donation!

Lastly, we are holding our annual Valentine’s Night event on Tuesday, February 14 but the event sold out a month in advance! We hope if you were wanting to join us for Valentine’s Night you’ll join us for one of our many other upcoming programs.

Borrow a Telescope!

By Dean Regas

As a member of the Observatory you can borrow a scope through the FOTO Telescope Loan program. For more info please call Dean at 513-321-5186.

Craig’s Corner

By Craig Niemi, Executive Director

There’s a plan.

Over the past couple of months, the board, staff and other stakeholders have been developing the Observatory’s next Strategic Plan.

Our thanks to Sharon Mitchell for all her help facilitating the work. I had taken part in other planning sessions with Sharon and recognized that with her extensive experience working with non-profits that she would look at the Observatory objectively.

During the process we shared individually, as a group, and in action teams, our successes and challenges and worked together to come up with a plan that will make the Observatory stronger and better able to fulfill its mission for years to come.

One of my goals is to revitalize all our committees. Moving forward the standing committees, as determined by the soon to be revised Bylaws, will ideally be chaired by board members. It is our hope that others, especially individuals new to the Observatory, will join the committees where they can have the most impact and personal satisfaction.

The Strategic Plan will be the focus of board meetings engaging staff and board in the ongoing planning process. As a “living document” we’ll be asking, “Is that goal still relevant?” “Are the strategies we identified still the correct ones?”

Rather than handcuffing the Observatory in a set-in-stone plan, we’ll better focus everyone’s energy, resources, and time in the same direction. We are committed to measurable goals, clear priorities, and to revisiting our strategies on an ongoing basis as both internal and external factors change and new opportunities arise.

Over the next few months we’ll be sharing more details of the plan and reporting out on our collective progress.

Topics With

Dean Regas

Star Oddities
Tuesday Feb. 7th 7pm

Marvelous Moon
Tuesday Mar. 7th 7pm

These fun and laid-back single topic classes for beginners focus on a variety of topics and will surely keep you looking up!

$15 per person $12 for members.

Sign Up Online or call 513-321-5186.
Welcome New & Renewing Members

Maureen Andreadis
Steve Barger
Blair Whitney Barter
Pia Alm and Chiranjit Basu
Kelly and Chris Berger
Gerald Black
Amber and Chris Bovard
James and Kate Bridges
Sue and Steve Brunker
Olivia and Richard Canada
Sarah Carl
Gregory Chupka
Julian Daily
Mike and Lisa Debbeler
Catherine and Bob DeFoor
Maury Drummey and Jerry Diersing
Evans Mirageas and Thomas Dreeze
Robert and Elizabeth Ehram
Melissa and Craig Erickson
Richard and Joan Finan
Natasha and Darryl Finley
Kris and Larry Gaddis
Catherine Gambone
Mel and Connie Gertz
Barbara Gloeckner
Richard and Joy Gunza
Colleen Hauser
Courtney and Ian Henderson
Colleen Hines
Clare and Roland Johnson
Kimberly and Timothy Kennedy
Oliver Loyd and Renata Kenney
Scott Gainey and Michelle Lierl
David and Kathryn Lindenschmidt
Kimberly and Benjamin Lundgren
Janice Mallory
Lyn Marsteller and John Pinney

Sofia Andreadis and Michael Milo
Harry and Pauline Moeller
Craig and Valerie Niemi
Marie O'Reilly
George Ostrum
Christopher Parrett and Mary Fitzpatrick
Joseph Peacock
Brad and Robert Peddenpohl
Tremaine and Andria Berry-Phillips
Jody Corbett and Bill Rellar
Mary Kay Rottner
David and Catherine Schillknecht
Scott and Jessi Schwarz
Walter and Marlene Smothers
Richter Snelling
Robert Stenton
Gary and Nancy Strassel
Suzanne and Tom Terwilliger
Joe and Darlene Verkamp
Susanna Vontrelle
Tien and Phat Vu
Keri and Brandon Weinstock

Thanks to all our terrific members, donors and volunteers.

A2Z+ Astronomy

“The Saros Panorama”

By Dave Bosse

The A2Z+ Astronomy class now turns its attention to the mechanics of eclipses. Some folks have heard of the “Saros,” the first order pattern of eclipses. Some folks may have heard of the “Saros Series,” the pattern of eclipse patterns. Not too many folks have heard of the “Saros Panorama,” the pattern of patterns of patterns of eclipses.

At the February A2Z+ class we’ll take a first look at this remarkable prediction tool for Solar as well as Lunar Eclipses discovered by Professor Dr. George van den Bergh in the 1950s.

The February A2Z+ class will be held on February 19th at 7:00 P.M in the West Wing of the Herget Building and is free to any member of the Observatory.

Benefits For New Members

With your membership, you become a Friend of the Observatory (FOTO) and join our family of amateur astronomers, history buffs, donors and volunteers.

FOTO meets on the Second Monday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Observatory. All members and their guests are welcome to attend. (Continued)
Your benefits include:
* Discounted or free admission to Friends of the Observatory (FOTO) programs
* Member’s only classes and programs
* Loaner telescopes
* Free admission to Astronomy Thu/Fri/Saturdays
* Discounts in the Gift Shop
* Free admission to the historic landmark buildings and permanent collections
* One-year subscription to the monthly FOTO e-newsletter
* Members-Only Facebook Page
* Access to the FOTO Library.

For more information, call the Observatory at 513-321-5186.

Stargazing at Stonelick

Saturdays – Feb. 18th & 25th

Our Nearest Galaxy

Need help with your telescope? Get expert tips setting it up and exploring the night sky. Stargazing begins at dusk. Open to all ages. Stargazes are weather permitting.

“Like” Stonelick Stargazers for weather and holiday schedule updates.

Family Night

Saturday Feb. 4th, 7pm

The Observatory wants to thank our members with a special night just for you.

If you’re a member at the Family Level ($60/year) or above, we invite you to bring friends and family for this special event. And best of all it’s free.

Meet your fellow members, explore the Observatory museum, and view Venus and the Moon through the telescopes (weather permitting).

Space is limited to 70 people.

To RSVP call 513-321-5186 or email Kelsey Stryffe at: Kelsey@cincinatiosservatory.org

Tour the Observatory

February 12 & 26th
Drop in between 1-4pm

The 1873 Observatory designed by Samuel Hannaford

Stop by for the whole story or just the highlights. It’s all fascinating and connects our past with your future. Free for members. Group tours by appointment.

The Observatory by Day

The Observatory is open Noon to 4 pm Monday through Friday! Stop by for a tour.

FOTO Planning Meeting

The next FOTO Planning Meeting is Thursday, February 16th at 7pm at the Observatory. Help plan programs and events for your fellow members. Open to all members.
The Big Show for 2017 will be the Total Solar Eclipse. I hope most dedicated sky watchers will travel to the center line for totality. No matter where you watch the eclipse, a solar filter will be needed for the partial phases. Only in the centerline and then only for the few minutes of totality do you not need a solar filter. To better understand how the sun can be harmful to our eyes during a solar eclipse please follow this NASA link: https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEhelp/safety2.html. A safe solar filter should transmit less than 0.003% (density 4.5) of visible light (380 to 780 nm) and no more than 0.5 (density 2.3) of the near infrared light (780 to 1400 nm). So, as you look at solar filters, go for a density of 5.0 or a welder's glass of No.14 and you will be safe for the eclipse. Check www.rainbowsymphonystore.com for various types of eclipse filters.

If you have planetarium software on your computer, set if for August 21, 2017 and watch the eclipse preview. In Cincinnati, the partial eclipse starts at 1:01 pm with a small “bite” taken out of the sun in the upper right hand side. At 2:29 pm the partial eclipse reaches its maximum with 90.5% of the sun covered. The partial eclipse ends at a 3:54 pm. Hope for clear skies.

Already a Best Seller!

From Super-Secret Spacecraft to Volcanoes in Outer Space, Extraterrestrial Facts to Blow Your Mind!

Dean Regas’ first book will take you from the Earth to the edge of the universe and back. You may not bodily go where no one has gone before, but your imaginations will soar among the stars, see constellations from different perspectives, and fall into a black hole. It’s available in the Observatory Gift Shop.

Intro into Astronomy with Dean Regas

A Short Course in Astronomy

There will NOT be any classes in February, but Dean will hold classes in March on the 15th, 22nd and 29th.

Community Rewards Number for the Observatory

After a quick and easy sign up online, every time you swipe your Kroger Plus Card a donation goes to support the Observatory’s mission. No cost to you; no loss of fuel points.

Did You Know….?

Herschel Crater on Saturn’s moon Mimas is nearly as tall as Mt. Everest.
NEW! Cosmic Kids Youth Astronomy Program

Saturday Feb. 18th
Saturday Mar. 18th
Saturday April 15th
Saturday May 20th

Grades 1-3 9:30-10:30am
Grades 4-6 11:00-12:00pm

The Cincinnati Observatory will be hosting classes for the entire family. Explore the cosmos during our new multi-disciplinary class which helps grades 1st-6th learn and discover topics in astronomy and investigate the wonders beyond our world. This astronomy class is open to students with a curiosity about space, and their families. There will be safe solar viewing with the telescopes, tours of the buildings, and hands-on classroom activities to build confidence and knowledge in science.

New topics each month. Sign up for one class or up to all.

Reservations are required and space is limited. Admission $5/person/class; Observatory members are free.

If you have any questions or would like to register, contact Katie at katie@cincinnatiobservatory.org or call 513-321-5186.

Late Night Date Night

Sat. February 4th & 25th 10:30pm (Feb 18 Sold Out!)

Can’t sleep? Looking for a romantic Saturday night out under the stars? Come see what the Observatory is like after hours. You’ll get to use the oldest big telescope in the U.S. to view astronomical objects that are not visible until late at night (weather permitting). Get a sneak preview of the next season’s planets and stars a month or two ahead of everyone else.

For adults only. If the weather does not permit viewing, we’ll have fun showing you around the universe at behind the scenes at the Observatory. Admission is $25 per person. Space is limited. Sign up by calling 513-321-5186 or Register Online.

STEM Education Update Astronomy Camp

By Katie Vaughn

We are blasting off into summer with a week-long camp! Thanks to a collaboration with the Cincinnati Museum Center the Observatory will host summer camp the weeks of June 5th and June 12th.

We will look through our historic telescopes, observe the mysteries of the universe and hopefully inspire a few future astronomers! For more information or to make reservations, call 513-287-7001.

New Telescope

China’s brand new FAST radio telescope has double the sensitivity of the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico, and five to 10 times the surveying speed, making it Earth’s ultimate alien-finding telescope. The FAST telescope’s ability to detect interstellar signals up to 1,351 light years away makes it a natural for “searching for intelligent extraterrestrial life.

Did You Know….

Pluto was not discovered until 1930.

Did You Know…..

96% of the universe is made up of dark matter and dark energy of which we now know next to nothing.
Connect with Your Observatory

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Our Partners in Science, Sustainability & Local History

This is The End!