Well, surprise, surprise—the SuperMoon sighting of late February was clouded out. So what else is new? Seems like this winter has been one big, fat raincloud.

In other sad news, NASA officially said goodbye to the Mars Rover, Opportunity. After 15 years exploring the Martian surface, low batteries and a massive dust storm proved too much to overcome for the little robot. NASA sent one last message to Rover, hoping to wake it up. It was the Billie Holiday tune “I’ll Be Seeing You”. Here’s the final verse of the song:

I’ll find you in the morning sun
And when the night is new
I’ll be looking at the moon
But I’ll be seeing you

I read there were lots of tear-eyed engineers that day, but former Star Trek actor, George Takei is hopeful that we’ll find Rover again when humans finally set foot on Mars.

In happier news, photos of Ultima Thule by New Horizons are better than ever. This distant Kuiper Belt object was photographed for 6.5 minutes on January 1, 2019. At the time, New Horizons was 4,019 miles from Ultima Thule and a whopping 4.1 billion miles from Earth.

The higher resolution of these new pictures bring out many surface features that weren’t apparent in earlier images. Among them are several bright, circular patches and many small dark pits near the terminator.

"Whether these features [the pits] are craters produced by impactors, sublimation pits, collapse pits or something entirely different is being debated in our science team," said New Horizons Deputy Project Scientist John Spencer, of the Southwest Research Institute.

Lastly, for the first time ever, astronomers believe they’ve discovered an exoplanet that survived a catastrophic collision with another planet, evidence coming from two twin exoplanets that seem to be more fraternal than identical. Located 1,700 light-years away in the
constellation Cygnus the Swan, exoplanets Kepler-107b and 107c are nearly identical in size, yet Kepler 107c is nearly three times as massive as 107b. Research suggests that Kepler 107c was smacked by a third planet at some point in its history, leaving behind a hefty, iron-rich core.

Ok, ok, maybe someday the clouds will part again.
Stay strong, my fellow stargazers, and Keep Looking Up.

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**Paul Nohr Sundial 10th Anniversary**

Sunday March 24th 1-4pm

Cincinnati remembers Paul Nohr (1939-2006) as the heart of the Observatory. His smiling guidance inspired students—both kids and kids-at-heart alike—to discover wonders about the world around them. He gave them the means to pursue them through his caring restoration of the historic telescopes and his unselfish sharing of his considerable knowledge. As a memorial to all he gave to the greater Cincinnati community, in 2009 we honored Paul with a horizontal sundial, totaling over 50 feet in diameter, constructed on the grounds of his beloved Observatory.

Today, Paul’s legacy guides our ambitions. We aim for excellence in our education programs while maintaining the integrity of our history. Paul set high standards for both. Our appreciation is eternal. Paul’s memorial is stalwart and permanent, and used daily as a teaching tool for visiting school children reminding all of his contributions to science education and history.

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**Sunday March 24, 2019 Open House. Drop in between 1-4pm**

Sundial demonstrations and safe Sun viewing (weather permitting). Tours of our National Landmark Observatories. Light refreshments. No RSVP needed.

The Observatory wishes to again thank all who so generously contributed to Paul's memorial.

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**History Notes**

By John Ventre, COC Historian

**CAS’s Board Reply to Longworth’s Request to Relocate from Mt. Adams**

At the April 22, 1845, Board of Control Meeting of the Directors of the Cincinnati Astronomical Society recorded the following report.

---

Board member Taylor reported that he had received an offer for the Society, made by Mr. Ewing, for a tract of ground consisting of two or three acres, provided the Society should accept the request of Mr. Longworth that the Society should relocate from Mt. Adams. Mr. Ewing’s land was situated near the site of the original Observatory. After some discussion of this subject the further consideration of it was postponed indefinitely.

The following resolutions were presented by Mr. Perkins and adopted by the Board. Resolved, that it is not the wish of the Board of Control of the Cincinnati Astronomical Society that the Observatory should be removed from its present location unless absolutely necessary: and further Resolved, that the Board of Control is not at liberty to enter into any arrangement for the disposal of the ground given by Mr. Longworth or any part thereof without the consent of the Society.

It was also Resolved that although the Board does not wish to express an opinion on the above subject, in relation to its propriety or expediency, yet they are willing upon the application of any member, to bring the subject before the Society. The Resolution was adopted.

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Principal Source: Minutes of the Cincinnati Astronomical Society, Board of Control, April 22, 1845.
**STEM Education Update**

By Samantha Pepper

**It’s Field Trip Season!**

Spring is right around the corner and you know what that means. It's field trip season!

The Cincinnati Observatory offers field trips to all ages which include an interactive classroom presentation, a tour of the historic telescopes, and safe solar viewing on clear days!

To learn more visit our website. If you or a teacher you know would like to schedule a field trip email Samantha Pepper or call 513-321-5186. Available dates will fill up fast!

**Radio Astronomy!**

*Looking Up* with Dean Regas and Anna Merlen

*Brought to you by Cincinnati Public Radio & WVXU*

**Summer Camps 2019**

This summer the Museum Center is offering more camps than ever before both at Union Terminal and at community partner locations around the Greater Cincinnati Area including the Observatory.

**June 3-7 @ the Observatory**

K-2: Future Astronauts
3-7: Rocket Science

**June 10-14 @ the Observatory**

K-2: Living in Space
3-7: Mission to Mars

For more information and to register call 513-287-7001 or sign up online.

**Astro Topics with Dean Regas**

**Astrology Not Astronomy**

Tues. Mar. 5th 7p

**The Spring Sky**

Tues. Apr. 9th 8p

**Scale of the Solar System**

Tues. May 7th 8p

**Spectacular Sun**

Tues. June 18th 7p

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.
Astronomy Nights

Thursday Mar. 7, 14, 21
Friday Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
All 8:00 pm-9:30 pm
Free for Members!

While renovation work continues on the Mitchell building Astro Evenings will feature the 1904 Alvan Clark Telescope.

Are you in awe with the beauty of the night sky? Have questions about the Universe?

This is where you can get the answers. Astronomy Evenings include ever-changing short presentations on a wide variety of topics and plenty of time for your astro-questions. Tour this National Historic Landmark. And if clear, view the Moon, planets and deep space treasures through the historic 1904 telescope. (Program is held rain or shine)

The topics and the night sky change week-to-week/month-to-month so you can visit often to hear and see something new. Free for Members!

For the latest schedule visit the web calendar and sign up online.

What’s Up @ NASA

Tuesday April 23 7pm

Sorry-SOLD OUT!

Dr. David Rutishauser is a Cincinnati native and 1988 graduate of Purcell Marian High School, who has worked as an engineer for NASA for the past 18 years.

David is relocating back to his hometown of Cincinnati so we’ll have more opportunities to hear about NASA.

Stargazing at Stonelick

Saturdays-March 2, 9 & 30th

Bring the Family!

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.

A2Z+ Astronomy

Back to Basics: The Sun

By Dave Bosse

The Sun does not look like a star, at least not like the other stars in the sky. We know it to be a star, but again, it does not look like any other star. We are just too darn close. A mere 93 million miles away from a real live star!

At the March edition of the A2Z+ Astronomy class we’ll take a look at our Sun as a star. How is it different from other stars, really? Or how is it the same, really? We will tap into the advantage that ONE Astronomical Unit separation provides and learn as much as we can about stars from the one that doesn’t look like a star. Bring the Sun-tan lotion!

The A2Z+ Astronomy class meets the third Sunday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the West Wing of the Herget Building (March 17th, 7:00 P.M.). Discussions cover contemporary astronomical topics as well as those historic. No pre-requisite knowledge of Math or Astronomy necessary. The group meets for about an hour or so and is free to any member of the Observatory.
New & Renewing Members!

Sean Andres
Blair Whitney Barter
Carol and Jon Beeson
Jim and Christine Bennett
John Berling
Lauren Brandstetter
Rhoda and John Brooks
Angie Carter
Peter Waldron and Alena Chadwick
Gregory Chupka
James Clark
Amanda Collins
Linda Kollar and Dan Crick
The Madigan Family
Barbara Gloeckner
Donna Wirth and Bob Groszer
Barbara Hammond
Jessica Hataway
John Hill
Mary Hofacker
Noelle and David Houben
Albert Jacobs
Clare and Roland Johnson
Andrew Jones
Mark King
Evelyn Laux
Dale and Heather Lombardo
John McFerran
Caroline McNally
Martha Mehl
Patrick and Cara Meier
Bruce and Michelle Miller
Sara Miller
Bob and Hayley O'Donnell
JoAnne and Poul Pedersen
Sheila and George Riley
Anthony Pierson and Ashley Ryan
Joseph Gelwicks and Barbara Smith
Bob Stiens
Charles Tharp
Robert and Elizabeth Turner
Debra Walker
Duane Watson

Thanks to all our terrific members, donors and volunteers! We hope you will visit often in 2019!

Making Progress

The Mitchel Observatory ca 1904

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.

Your benefits include:
• Discounted or free admission to Friends of the Observatory (FOTO) programs
• Member’s only classes and programs
• Volunteer Training and Professional Development
• Loaner telescopes
• Free admission to Astro Thu/Fri/Saturdays
• Discounts in the Gift Shop
• Free admission to the historic landmark buildings and permanent collections.
• Use of the FOTO lending Library.
• One-year subscription to the monthly e-newsletter
• Members-Only Facebook Page

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

Since November the Mitchel Observatory has been undergoing some extensive repair and rehabilitation. The 20+ year old flat roof has reached the end of its service life and the dome has had its share of annoying leaks for a while. Repairs will also include gutters and some masonry work to make sure the building is weather-tight.

The office and classroom will still be available but our Merz & Mahler telescope won’t be seeing starlight until early-March. In the meanwhile we’ll feature the 1904 Clark Telescope for programs and viewing.

Our thanks to the University of Cincinnati for all they do to maintain this National Historic Landmark and support our mission.
Lifelong Learning

Enrich your life with UC Continuing Education’s exciting array of noncredit short, yet in-depth, courses and educational opportunities designed for diverse audiences of all ages.

Tour of the Universe
Wed. Mar. 6th 7-9pm

Behind the Scenes
Tues. May 14th 7-9pm

From Attic to Cellar
Mon. May 20th 7-9pm

Binocular Astronomy
Wed. May 29th 7-9pm

How to Use Your Telescope
Tues. June 4th 7-9pm

$35 per person.
To register call 513-556-6932 or select your course(s) online and click Register.

Save-the-Dates

in your 2019 Calendar!
On Sale $5 each!

April 14  First Light Night
April 23  What’s Up @ NASA
June 16  Sunday Sun-day Sundae
July 6 & 13 Jupiter Nights
July 21  Sunday Sun-day Sundae
July 20 50th Anniv. of Apollo 11
August 3 & 10  Saturndays

History Tours of the Observatory

2nd & 4th Sundays
March 10 & 24th
Drop in between 1-4pm

2019 marks our 177th Year!

Stop by for the whole story or just the highlights. It’s all fascinating and connects our past with your today.

$5 per person. Free for members. Group tours by appointment.

FOTO Committee Officers

Chair - Valerie Niemi
Vice Chair - John Blasing
Secretary - Michelle Gainey
Treasurer - Dr. Al Scheide
Member Representatives to the COC Board: Dave Bosse; JoAnne Pedersen; Terry Endres

To contact an Officer or Rep email craig@cincinnatiobservatory.org and I’ll forward your contact information on to them.

Community Rewards
Number for the Observatory

Amazon “Smiles”
On 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. https://www.kroger.com/account/create

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the Observatory whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. Next time you shop at Amazon start at http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1665954
The Cincinnati Observatory is hosting weekday tours of our National Historic Landmark. The tours are held at 1pm, 2pm and 3pm Monday through Friday. Tours include both of the observatories and telescopes, including the Mitchel telescope—the oldest public telescope still in use in this hemisphere.

$5 per person. Want to schedule a group up to 12? Sign Up Online. Call 513-321-5186 for more.

Please join us at the Observatory on Monday, March 11th at 7:30 PM for a presentation on understanding and measuring the effects of light pollution.

Measuring the Effects of Light Pollution Using the Sky Quality Meter will describe, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, the effects of light pollution and its measurement.

FOTO will soon be purchasing a Sky Quality Meter and its regular use will soon be part of the already established procedure of recording details about observing conditions on public observation nights at the Observatory.

These measurements will be uploaded and shared with others from around the world, to document the growing problem of light pollution. By taking these readings at each observing session, COC and FOTO also hope to raise public awareness of light pollution.

Our presenter will be Tom East, a volunteer at the Observatory, who has presented to FOTO on previous occasions regarding light pollution.

The Observatory is on Twitter and Instagram too!
“The Sky Is Falling!” -- Or Did So Several Millennia Ago.

By R. A. Davis, Ph.D., Observatory Curator

In December of last year, a long-time friend of the Observatory donated a nickel-iron meteorite (a.k.a., octahedrite). As it happens, the specimen is just one small piece of a huge meteorite that came to Earth some 4000 to 6000 years ago and broke into many fragments.

Here is the saga of the discovery, according to paperwork that accompanied the donation: In 1576, a Spanish governor in Argentina was informed that a piece of iron had fallen from heaven some 800 km (500 miles) north-northwest of Buenos Aires. The governor sent an expedition, under the command of a Capitan de Miravel, to a place called Campo del Cielo, where the mass of iron was said to have fallen. He brought back to the governor a few pieces of a huge iron mass the good captain called Meson de Fierro, Spanish for a big “table of iron”.

Over the years since that original find, there have been a large number of chunks located. The total mass of the fall has been estimated to have been some 45 to 55 metric tons (that’s 50 – 60 of the tons hefted in the United States, technically called “short-tons”).

Today the whole mass generally is known under the sobriquet The Campo del Cielo Meteorite. (The name of the original locality means “field of the sky” or “field of heaven”, --- -- which even may have been derived from memories of ancestors of the local inhabitants who witnessed the actual event).

Compared to 50 tons of iron, the meteorite at hand weighs in at a mere 1.28 kg (2.43 lb). It is a jagged, shiny-metal mass a bit over 11 cm long (~ 4.5 in) and 7 cm (nearly 3 in) across. (Note that, sometime in the past, the specimen had been “cleaned” so that the metal is bright and shiny.)

Perhaps ironically (no pun intended!), this is not the only piece of The Campo del Cielo Meteorite at the Observatory. Some 13 years ago, John Ventre, the Observatory’s Historian, brought in a 22-kg specimen (some 49 lb). This is the really heavy meteorite that wows visitors from the shelf in the Pier Room of the first floor of the elder of the two Observatory buildings. Now that specimen has a tiny sibling that actually can be held in one hand!

Couples Fall in Love with Valentine's Night at the Observatory

By Anna Hehman

On Wednesday, February 14th the Observatory hosted 150 lovebirds for our annual Valentine’s Night!

This year, for this incredibly popular event, we again held two sessions, a predinner event from 5-7pm and a post-dinner one from 8-10pm. Both events sold out by early January, and we had many first-time visitors to the Observatory for this exciting evening!

While the weather didn’t cooperate for viewing, groups were treated to delicious desserts, flowers for their sweethearts, as well as tours and a champagne toast. The event raised over $4,000 to support the Observatory and our programs!

Another big Thank You to all the staff and volunteers who helped make the evening a success!
Intro to Astronomy with Dean Regas

Wed. April 3, 10 & 17 8-10p
Already Filling Up!

This 3-night (once a week) introductory astronomy course is perfect for beginners who want to know more about observing the night sky.

Led by astronomer and co-host of PBS’ Star Gazer, Dean Regas, this course will show you the stars. You will learn how to identify stars, constellations, and planets as well as viewing tips for the Moon.

Each night includes viewing through the historic telescopes (weather permitting).

$50 per person for the series. $40 for Observatory members.

Space is limited. Sign Up Online or call 513-321-5186 to register.

Craig’s Corner
By Craig Niemi, Executive Director

February FOTO Meeting Highlights
By Michelle Lierl Gainey, FOTO secretary.

The Observery actively seeks out strategic collaborations and programs with like-minded, often cross-curricular organizations.

Cincinnati is rich with cultural, historic and STEM organizations. Large and small, some well-known, others less so, but all with a unique programs and stories to tell.

One of our partners is the Museums and Historic Sites of Greater Cincinnati. MHS is a community of over 40 small to mid-sized historic sites, museums and libraries that keeps Cincinnati’s history relevant through public and K-12 programs, professional development for its member organizations, and collaboration between MHS sites.

With the arrival of spring (finally!) many sites will be soon opening for the season.

With our region’s relatively compact geographic size, most are just a short dive to get to, and all are worth the trip.

You can find out more about our partners, their programs, and events on the MHS Facebook site.

Borrow a Telescope!
By Dean Regas

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

FOTO Planning Meeting

Thursday March 21st 7pm.

Help plan programs and events for your fellow members. Open to all.
The Observatory Staff

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Connect to Your Observatory

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Like us on Facebook
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Enjoy our photos & videos on Instagram.