



The Observer

April 2019 (#46)

Schedule of public programs on last page!

TEN YEARS OF AN OBSERVATORY AT SOUTH HARRISON PARK

In April 2009 this newsletter featured a short article on South Harrison Park. That is because the observatory at South Harrison had just gotten going at that point. December 2008, January 2009, and February 2009 were unusual in that we had three newsletters in three months (usually we only have two to four a year). This is because, as reported in the January 2009 newsletter, “As of the beginning of 2009 the mayor of Louisville has closed Otter Creek Park as part of an effort to balance the Louisville budget [and balancing the Louisville budget is in the news again today]”. The newsletter continued—

Does the closing of Otter Creek Park mean the end of the observatory as a public resource?

No, it does not, we are happy to say. Some doors close, but others open. A new observatory is opening in Harrison County, Indiana, a few miles southwest of the town of Elizabeth. This is happening in large part due to the alertness of the Louisville Astronomical Society (LAS), and in particular the LAS president, Ken Alderson. Alderson knew that Harrison County was building an observatory at South Harrison Park, and



www.jefferson.kctcs.edu/observatory

needed equipment to stock it and expertise to run it. When he heard about Otter Creek Park's closing he contacted Chris Graney of JCTC and put Graney in touch with Claudia Howard of Harrison County Parks & Recreation. As of this writing (January 5, 2009) there is much that remains to be finalized, but it is pretty clear that Jefferson Community & Technical College will be supporting Harrison county's observatory in much the same way as it has supported Otter Creek's. Currently Otter Creek Observatory astronomer Henry Sipes is putting a great deal of effort into getting the Harrison facility up and running. He will be the astronomer for the South Harrison observatory. The South Harrison observatory is a nice facility. It is another "roll-off roof" observatory, similar in many ways to the building at Otter Creek. Regardless of what ultimately happens at Otter Creek Park, Harrison will be a great new resource for astronomy in the Louisville region....

In fact, there is already a public program scheduled for the South Harrison observatory! On January 10, in celebration of the launch of the International Year of Astronomy 2009, and to introduce the new South Harrison observatory, there will be a double public program -- both a daytime/solar program and an evening program....



THE UNIVERSE
YOURS TO DISCOVER

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
ASTRONOMY
2009

**2009 was the International Year of
Astronomy**

The February 2009 newsletter reported that

Things are progressing well with the new South Harrison observatory.... we once again have a regular schedule of public programs. At the moment Harrison is operating with limited equipment as a few bureaucratic paperwork hurdles remain to be cleared before equipment from the Otter Creek location can be moved to Harrison. However, the paperwork is moving along -- it is just moving slowly.

It was the April 2009 issue that was the first “normal” issue of the newsletter with the observatory fully operational at South Harrison Park. Included in the April 2009 issue was this little article about the park itself:

About South Harrison Park

The new observatory is located in South Harrison Park. South Harrison Park is operated by the Harrison County Parks & Recreation Department, who refers to it as the "Best Kept Secret in Harrison County" -- the park to come to when you need a little peace and quiet. For Louisville area residents who live in Indiana, central Louisville, or east of Louisville, it generally takes less time to get to South Harrison than it took to get to Otter Creek. Those who live south of Louisville will have to drive considerably further to get to South Harrison than they had to drive to get to Otter Creek. South Harrison Park is 220 acres of woodlands, open areas (including several playgrounds and a pool), and athletic fields. It is located between Elizabeth and Laconia, Indiana. The newly renovated camping area draws campers from all parts of the country. If you are looking for a good place to camp, especially if you used to camp at Otter Creek, South Harrison is worth checking out.



Images from
www.harrisoncoparks.com

Happily, after ten years things are still chugging along at the South Harrison Park Observatory. The photo at right is from 2009, but the observatory looks much the same. Check out the upcoming programs, and come on out during the nice weather!





UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT THE OBSERVATORY

ALL TIMES ARE EASTERN TIME. **ALL PROGRAMS ARE HELD AT THE SOUTH HARRISON PARK LOCATION.** PROGRAMS WILL BE HELD EVEN IN THE EVENT OF CLOUDS OR LIGHT RAIN.

HOWEVER, PROGRAMS WILL BE CANCELLED WHEN CONDITIONS MAY PRODUCE *HAZARDOUS DRIVING* ON THE TWO-LANE ROADS THAT LEAD TO THE OBSERVATORY (CONDITIONS SUCH AS HEAVY RAIN, THUNDERSTORMS, FOG, SEVERE WEATHER OR FLASH FLOOD WARNINGS, SNOW OR ICE, HIGH WIND, ETC.). **IN SHORT, PLEASE DO NOT MAKE THE TRIP TO THE OBSERVATORY IN BAD WEATHER.**

- **April 20, 2019 (SPECIAL evening twilight program).**

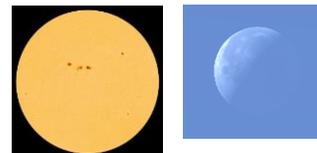
Program begins at sunset (at approximately 8:25 pm).

Tonight we will be having a special program featuring the stars and a discussion on the **Science of the**

Calendar and the Dates of Easter & Passover—all weather permitting (what we will be able to see depends on the weather).



- **April 27, 2019 (daytime program).** *Program begins at 10:00 am.* Come observe the sun through a safe solar filter, and learn about the sun, the seasons, and time; plus, the quarter moon might even be visible during the day—weather permitting (what we will be able to see depends on the weather).



- **May 11, 2019 (evening twilight program).** *Program begins at sunset (at approximately 8:45 pm).* Tonight's program will feature the stars of May and the quarter moon—all weather permitting (what we will be able to see depends on the weather).

