The Observer

March 2010 (#23)

Schedule of public programs on last page!

From Henry Sipes: Park Astronomer, and now JPL Solar System Ambassador

Hello Folks!

This is going to be a great year for exploring the solar system. I invite you all to come out to the observatory and explore the stars with us. This year, besides volunteering for Jefferson Community & Technical College and the Harrison County Parks and Recreation Department, I am honored to represent NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) Solar System Ambassador program as an ambassador for the Meade County and South Harrison County areas.

The Solar System Ambassadors program is a public outreach program designed to work with motivated volunteers across the nation. These volunteers communicate the excitement of JPL's space exploration missions, and information about recent discoveries, to people in their local communities.

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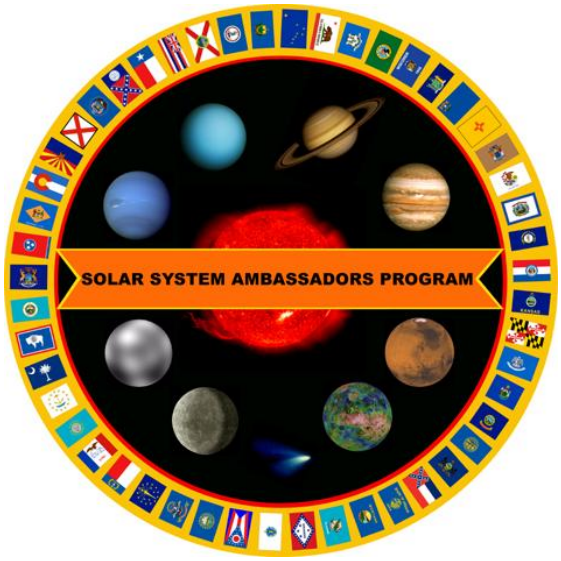
www.jefferson.kctcs.edu/observatory

There are almost 500 Ambassadors in 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico bringing the excitement of space to the public. Ambassadors are space enthusiasts from various walks of life who are interested in providing greater service and inspiration to the community at large.

The Solar System Ambassadors program builds on and expands the outstanding efforts undertaken by the Galileo mission since 1997. Because of the success of the original Galileo Ambassadors program, JPL missions exploring Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Asteroids, Comets, Earth, the Sun and the Universe now come together to expand the program's scope to the Solar System and beyond.



The missions that currently support the Solar System Ambassadors program are: Cassini, EPOXI, Voyager, Mars missions, Kepler, WISE, LRO/LCROSS, MESSENGER, New Horizons, Dawn, Spitzer Warm Mission, Stardust NExT, Earth missions, Deep Space Network, and Human Spaceflight. Additional support comes from JPL's Informal Education Office and NASA's Solar System SEPOF. Additionally, Solar System Ambassadors support International Polar Year, International Year of Astronomy, NASA Astrobiology Institute investigations and Educator Astronaut Shuttle missions.

The Solar System Ambassadors program is sponsored by the JPL in Pasadena, CA, an operating division of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and a lead research and development center for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

So, you might be asking yourself what this means for the observatory. Well, we are going to hold a NASA night about every other month where part of our regular program will include a NASA-related presentation. I have just now completed my first event for a group of Scouts from Lanesville.

Besides events at the observatory, I will travel up to Buffalo Trace Park again this year for a NASA program with nighttime observing of the heavens. I also will be traveling around the area doing private programs for schools, etc. Besides working fulltime for Samtec Inc, I am also pursuing a Master's Degree in Astronomy from the Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia. This is through their online degree program.

See what you can do if you stop watching TV and give up sleep?

I will see you out there among the stars.

Clear Skies,

Henry Sipes

Galileo's *Starry Messenger* at the Louisville Free Public Libraries

No scientist, perhaps no person, in the past thousand years changed the world more than Galileo. What did he do that was so important? Well a new exhibit at the Louisville Free Public Library ventures to find out. "Galileo's Starry Messenger: 1610 – 2010" explores the work of Galileo, touching on the science that came before him, then focusing on what Galileo discovered and what those discoveries have meant to the future of science. In addition to exquisitely produced panels, the exhibit also includes a full-color reproduction of the *Sidereus Nuncius* (the *Starry Messenger*), Galileo's first book on astronomy which he published in 1610. The reproduction is

based on a copy at the University of Oklahoma, a copy that is actually signed by Galileo. It's not the real thing, but if it were then you couldn't flip through the pages.

The exhibit will be on display at four branch libraries for two weeks each, beginning with the Southwest Branch Library. In conjunction with the exhibit, astronomer and project coordinator Prof. Christopher Graney will host a discussion of Galileo and his work at each location. Participating library locations and program dates are:

Southwest Library
Exhibit: January 4 – January 19
Program: Tuesday, January 19, 7 p.m.

Highlands/Shelby Park Library
Exhibit: January 21 – February 10
Program: Wednesday, February 10, 7 p.m.

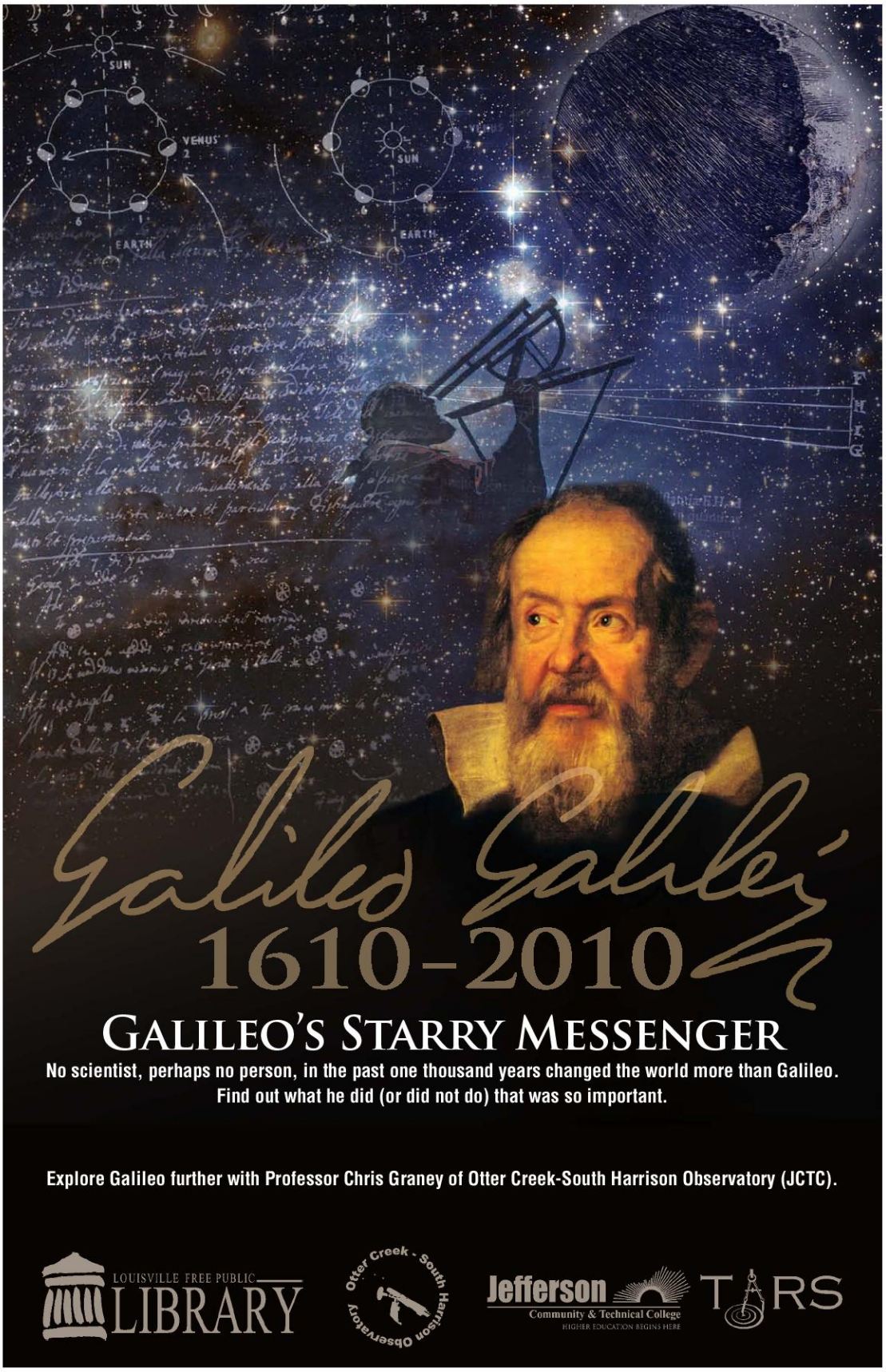
Crescent Hill Library
Exhibit: February 12 – March 1
Program: Monday, March 1, 7 p.m.

Middletown Library
Exhibit: March 3 – March 18
Program: Thursday, March 18, 7 p.m.

"Galileo's Starry Messenger: 1610 – 2010" was created by Otter Creek-South Harrison Observatory, and funded by the Observatory and the Jefferson Community & Technical College Technology and Related Sciences (TARS) Division. For more information on the exhibit and the program call 574-1611 or go to LFPL.org. The exhibit is free and open during regular library hours.

Five Years of the *Observer*!

The first issue of this newsletter, the *Observer*, was March 2005! That issue is available on the observatory web page, as is every other issue of the *Observer* ever produced.


SUN
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Galileo Galilei
1610–2010
GALILEO'S STARRY MESSENGER
No scientist, perhaps no person, in the past one thousand years changed the world more than Galileo.
Find out what he did (or did not do) that was so important.
Explore Galileo further with Professor Chris Graney of Otter Creek-South Harrison Observatory (JCTC).
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2010 Spring and Summer

South Harrison Park Observatory Events

*** ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE! ***

Nighttime programs:

Mar. 20th	8:30 pm to 10:30 pm
April 24th	8:30 pm to 10:30 pm **NASA Night**
May 15th	9:00 pm to 11:00 pm
June 12th	9:30 pm to 11:30 pm **NASA Night**
July 3rd	9:30 pm to 11:30 pm
July 17th **NASA Night Event** @ Buffalo Trace Park	
Aug. 28th	9:00 pm to 11:00 pm

Daytime programs:

Mar. 6th	11 am to 1 pm
April 3rd	11 am to 1 pm
May 1st	11 am to 1 pm
May 29th	11 am to 1 pm
June 26th	11 am to 1 pm
July 17th **NASA Day Event** @ Buffalo Trace Park	
Aug. 14th	11 am to 1 pm

All times are Eastern time zone.

All programs at South Harrison Park are open rain or shine.
Daytime programs allow you to safely view the Sun using solar filters.
Nighttime programs allow you to view the Moon, Stars, Planets, and more.

The facility is handicapped accessible and we feature a video display system for cloudy days and/or nights.

Contacts: Park Astronomer – Henry Sipes Home 270-828-6191
Cell 270-668-2103
Harrison County Park Office – 812-738-8236

Websites: http://www.harrisoncoparks.com/Observatory.html
http://www.jefferson.kctcs.edu/observatory/