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2023 Flagstaff Star Party

The 2023 Flagstaff Star Party kicked off at Flagstaff's Buffalo Park on a breezy Thursday evening on September 21. About 650 visitors enjoyed an evening of exciting activities, presentations, and telescope viewing. The evening's Twilight Talk featured Northern Arizona Audubon Society president Kay Hawklee giving a presentation "Lights Out: Nocturnal migrating birds headed our way!" Though Friday was cloudy and even rainy, over 30 visitors were able to enjoy Dr. Michael West's Twilight Talk "Guided by the Night: Can Animals See the Stars?" to learn that, sadly, your pet dog and cat probably cannot see the stars clearly, though owls



Dr. Michael West considers the night vision of animals.

and many other birds clearly can, and even dung beetles know where the Milky Way is! Saturday was a wonderful night, beginning with broken clouds but clearing into the evening. The evening began with the beautiful flute music of Jeannette Moore and Andrea Graves playing as Duo Catalina, while the sun set, and stars came out between the clouds. A large group of children and their adults enjoyed learning about how lighting can confuse and disrupt nocturnal migrating birds by running their own obstacle course! By the time we wrapped up at 10 PM over 1100 visitors attended, enjoying star-filled skies (and Saturn!).

Overall, the 10th annual Flagstaff Star Party touched the hearts and imaginations of over 1700 people, mostly from Flagstaff but also from across the state and country!

FSP 2023 visitors tell us about their favorite part of the Star Party . . .



"I loved hearing people talk about what they aimed their telescopes at, it's so great to hear people share their passion while showing cool stuff!"

"Seeing the stars and planets through a telescope. I saw Jupiter for the first time!"

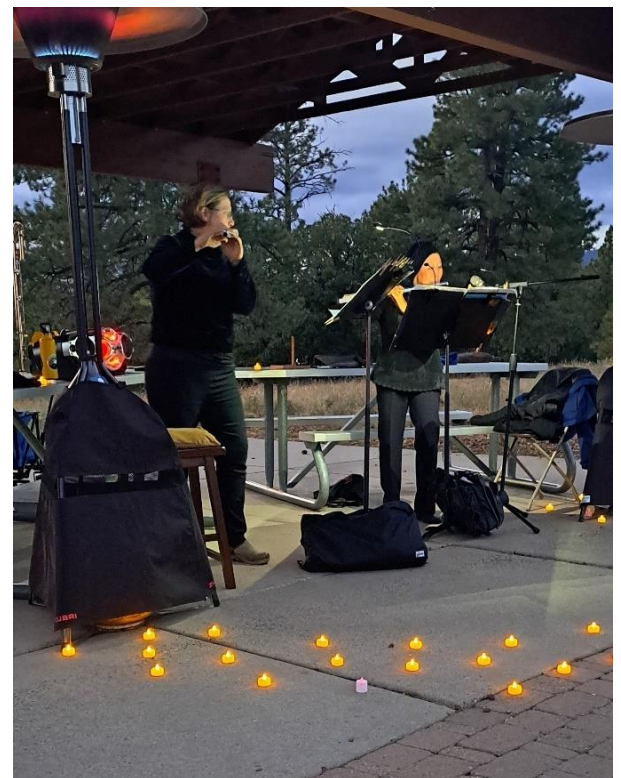
"Seeing Saturn for the first time ever, also being able to see the Milky Way for the first time ever."

Telescope host "thank you" at Dark Sky Brewing

"Viewing Saturn and enjoying the beauty of the stars with others."

"The staff was so friendly."

"Everything!"



Live music by Duo Catalina

What's Happening with the Outdoor Lighting Code??

The City of Flagstaff officially adopted an updated Outdoor Lighting Code (OLC) nearly one year ago, in November, 2022. These updates are based on the recommendations generated from the DOD-funded "Joint Land Use Study" completed under Coconino County direction in 2019, and significantly improve this already world-leading lighting code. The Coalition was represented on the committee that oversaw development of the JLUS and the lighting code recommendations by current Board President Chris Luginbuhl. "Flagstaff and Coconino County continue to demonstrate their exceptional commitment to the highest quality lighting codes and night sky protection. As we move into the LED era, this updated code shows that dark skies can be equally well protected with sensible LED standards that limit wasted light and specify the use of amber lighting for most general illumination such as on roadways and parking lots," Luginbuhl noted.

The City and County have initiated an education program to inform businesses and residents about the new code, what it means for them and how they can be a part of ongoing efforts to preserve dark skies in Flagstaff, one of the signature characteristics of our community.

Meanwhile, Coconino County has moved to adopt an updated code for the County, closely following the Flagstaff OLC update. The County is seeking comments on the proposed new code on their website - see the call for comments that was posted on their website on 14 Sept. 2023:

<https://www.coconino.az.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=3007>

Become a Member of the Coalition

Your membership supports the mission of the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition: To celebrate, promote and protect the glorious dark skies of Flagstaff and Northern Arizona, and by example, set the gold standard in night sky protection.

Our mission is to celebrate the wonders of the nocturnal ecosystem that all humanity inhabits, to promote awareness and participation, and to protect this natural resource for future generations as our common inheritance. We work to enhance public awareness about the night and advocate for public policies that reduce wasteful lighting. By celebrating the values found in natural darkness, we work to continue Flagstaff's 60+ years of worldwide leadership in night sky protection.

<http://www.flagstaffdarkskies.org/become-a-member-of-the-coalition/>

FDSC Membership Meetings

The monthly FDSC Membership Meetings are scheduled on the third Wednesday of each month via a Zoom link. Reminders are sent out via email a few days prior to each meeting.

The agenda is typically in two parts: First are reports from our President and others about business topics relating to the Coalition. This part is followed by a talk by experts on topics relating to dark sky preservation. These talks are recorded and stored on the FDSC Youtube site – we currently have eleven talks that are available.

Please check these out at <https://www.youtube.com/@FDSC> to learn more about topics ranging from impacts of satellite constellations on astronomy to the activities of the Fountain Hills dark sky preservation projects.

We are always looking for speakers so if you would like to propose someone or give a talk yourself, please contact Don Davis, Chair, Membership Committee at: drd002@gmail.com

Astrophotography Corner

The Andromeda Galaxy, also called Messier 31, is part of what astronomers call "The Local Group," and lies a 'mere' 2-5 million light years from us. Like our own Milky Way, it is circled by two smaller satellite galaxies. Visible to the naked eye on dark transparent nights and a pretty view through small telescopes, it is even more impressive photographically. I imaged it a few nights ago with a fine 130-mm aperture refractor and a new spectrally modified Canon Re camera through narrow band pass filters that enhance the dark dust lanes in the spiral arms around the central core of the galaxy and bluish colored peripheral stars.

Best regards, **Klaus Brasch** - FDSC lifetime member

