

**Galilean Nights Event ID:** gn5

**Number of telescopes:** 2

**Number of organisers:** 1

**Number of attendees:** 250

**Event Report:**

Limpopo Astronomy Outreach visited University of Venda on the 22nd October and Makhado Crossing on the 24th October as part of the International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009) and Galilean Nights, the global celebration of Galileo's discoveries 400 years ago. This included an astronomy display and telescope viewing of Jupiter and the Moon. Part of the astronomy exhibition consists of posters showing our place in the Universe and the Milky Way, the Solar System and a series of posters showing an illustrated time-line of cosmic and fossil history going back 2.1 billion years.

This astronomy outreach initiative in the region is in collaboration with The South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) and The Department of Science and Technology (DST) and celebrated some of Galileo's findings, some of which were: That the Sun was not perfect, but has sunspots. There are thousands of stars invisible to the naked eye. The Moon has mountains and craters on its surface. Saturn has a ring system around it. The planet Venus goes through phases similar to the Earth's Moon and that Jupiter is orbited by four small moons. In 1612 he observed the planet Neptune 234 years before it was discovered by mathematical calculations. He discovered the laws governing falling bodies and projectiles and in the history of culture Galileo stands as a symbol of the battle against authority for the freedom of inquiry. Limpopo Astronomy and the Soutpansberg Astronomy Club would like to extend a warm thank you to telescope assistants from Louis Trichardt High School and Ridgeway Independent, Cuan, Phatu and James and also University of Venda, Makhado Crossing, Ladies Circle No 4, Zoutpansberger & Mirror, Maranga Phanda Office National and everyone who is involved in this outreach project in the Limpopo.