

Galilean Nights Event ID: gn564

Number of telescopes: 10

Number of organisers: 4

Number of attendees: 125

Event photos: We'll try to get to the Flickr Group so you can have some pictures from our event but won't be able to get to it for a few days.

Event Report:

Galilean Nights
and
TACO

Sponsored by A Time For Science (Nature and Science Learning Center) and in conjunction with millions of people around the world participating in the Cornerstone project of the International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009), Galilean Nights, over 100 folks of all ages came out to the Bray Hollow Nature Conservancy on Thursday October, 22 to enjoy gazing at the celestial sights that Galileo introduced the world to 400 years ago.

As sunset approached a partial cloud cover of high cirrus and some puffy cumulus threatened to rule out any chance of star gazing. However, by the time the sun set completely the clouds had dissipated and a beautiful sky presented itself. Ten telescopes were made available by members of the Carolina Skies Astronomy Club and other members and friends of the ATFS organization. Everyone who attended had a chance to see first hand the craters on the Moon, the planet Jupiter and its Galilean moons, and a number of other objects including the Andromeda Galaxy and the Ring Nebula. When we first started viewing the moons of Jupiter we could only see one but by the time the evening was over three were visible. This was very exciting for many of the participants. A guided tour of the night sky featuring several of the more prominent constellations as well as the stories and legends accompanying them was presented by the Director of Education for ATFS. Our stalwart registration crew was assisted by student volunteers from D.H. Conley High School who also provided assistance in the parking of cars and the direction of participants to the event site.

This event also qualified as a TACO event (Take a Child Outside) which is a nation-wide program started in response to the publication of Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*. TACO events are designed to help break down obstacles that keep children from discovering the natural world. By arming parents, teachers and other caregivers with resources on outdoor activities, the goal of organizations associated with TACO is to help children across the country develop a better understanding and appreciation of the environment in which they live, and a burgeoning enthusiasm for its exploration.