

**Galilean Nights Event ID:** gn649

**Number of telescopes:** 2

**Number of organisers:** 1

**Number of attendees:** 30

**Event photos:** Here is a link to a photo:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/44248049@N08/4060995733/in/pool-galileannights>

**Event Report:**

More than thirty adults and children gathered on a mild Thursday night at White Sulphur Springs Elementary School to see the same sights through a telescope as Galileo did 400 years ago. The weather was partly cloudy, but with enough holes in the clouds and steady air to afford good views of the Moon and Jupiter. A 20cm Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope and a 10.2cm reflector were used

Looking at the crescent Moon, people were amazed by the sight of the heavily cratered lunar surface and smooth, dark lava plains, just as Galileo was in 1609.

Only two of the four moons of Jupiter were visible when we first looked at the giant planet--the third was hidden behind Jupiter and the fourth lost in the glare in front of the planet. Before long, the moon in front moved past the edge of Jupiter showing up as a bright dot against the darkness of space. Galileo also noticed the movement of Jupiter's moons (which he first called stars) and came to understand that they were actually moons orbiting Jupiter like a miniature solar system.

Many questions were asked about the Moon, the Galilean Moons, the different types of telescopes and how they work, and about the eyepieces. The crowd was very enthusiastic and appreciative throughout the evening.