



Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. EIN: 04-3551723
"Serving Amateur Astronomy and the Public by sponsoring educational events since 1932"



ALDRICH ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY - ADOPT A LIBRARY PROGRAM

LIBRARY TELESCOPE PROGRAM

The Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. was established in 1932 and is a central Massachusetts based 501 C(3) Non-Profit organization of amateur astronomers who have united to promote an understanding of the Night Sky through their mutual interest in observational astronomy (stargazing) and telescope making. Aldrich is also proud to have been the recipient of the "Out of the World Outreach Program for 2007, sponsored by Astronomy Magazine. Additional information about Aldrich, including an overview of our programs, events and activities, can be seen on our web site at: <www.aldrichastro.org>

The Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. is pleased to be working in collaboration with the Cornerstones of Science who are based in Brunswick, Maine to support the Library Telescope Program. This program enables interested libraries throughout Massachusetts to acquire a loaner telescope for their library patrons. This program is a continuation of one initiated by the New Hampshire Astronomical Society in December of 2008.

The goal of the Library Telescope Program is to help foster scientific literacy, stimulate an interest in astronomy, and provide people who have never looked through a telescope the chance to experience the excitement that comes from discovery.

Placing the telescopes in local public libraries allows a greater general access to the telescope since they are intended to be checked out of the library just as a book.

Where applicable, a local Club member acts as a foster parent to the scope. He or she will periodically clean and adjust the telescope, and act as a local astronomical resource to the library patrons. Additionally, a library member or student from a local school could be engaged as an apprentice astronomer to provide needed care to the scope.



Figure 1: Example of a modified library telescope

The telescope used in the Library Telescope Program is the Orion StarBlast 4.5-inch Astro Reflector Telescope, equipped with an 8-24mm zoom telescope eyepiece, and comes with supportive material. The 4 by 6 inch instruction manual accompanying the telescope is spiral-bound and laminated for durability. The telescope is easy to use, and has nothing to assemble. It is equipped with a strong swiveling wooden base, and is of easily manageable size, but has a relatively large optical tube. This means that the Moon and deep sky objects will show far more detail than one could see with the common "beginners" telescopes. It also has a large field of view that allows the object to stay in the eyepiece longer.

This is a quality instrument, reviewed by a number of astronomical publications and found quite worthy."

The Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. is excited and happy to extend this outstanding educational outreach program to libraries throughout their Massachusetts service area through their Adopt a Library Program. The highly successful Adopt a Library Program currently donates books about astronomy and space exploration to local libraries and offers support for summer reading programs through hands on STEM activities and PowerPoint presentations about current topics in astronomy and space exploration.

Funding for the scopes can come from a variety of sources: community grants and sponsorship by library patrons or local corporations interested in giving something back to their communities. The Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. will work with any library interested in acquiring a telescope by offering to discuss options for funding the telescopes and providing presentations to library supporters to build interest in the program. Aldrich will also offer ongoing support for any acquired telescope through training sessions for library staff and patrons who would be using the telescopes and will assign volunteers to fully maintain telescopes that will be used by any library.

Libraries in Massachusetts interested in acquiring a loaner telescope for their patrons should contact the Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. through our website: www.aldrichastro.org or aldrichastro@live.com, or preferably, send an e-mail directly to the Library Telescope Program Coordinator: John C. Root at jroot60@charter.net or telephone him directly at 508-753-4228 for more details about the program in Massachusetts.

We want to express our appreciation to the New Hampshire Astronomical Society for their assistance in helping us to initiate our program here in Massachusetts which is directly modeled after their highly successful program in New Hampshire.

Information for Libraries :

Before sending telescopes out, modifications are made to each telescope to make it user friendly including the following :

1. Attaching removable parts by flexible cords to keep them from getting lost
2. Decals with warnings reminding users that they should never use it to look at the sun
3. A permanently attached zoom lens making it easy for patrons to change magnifications while viewing an object that they have in the telescope field of view.
4. A reduced aperture lens for moon gazing to cut down the brightness of our near neighbor in space!
5. Modifications are also made to a finderscope on the telescope that replaces its button type watch-battery-sized power source with less expensive and easier to replace AA batteries.
6. The telescope also features a lunar map on the optical tube in the correct orientation as you would see it through the telescope, meaning upside-down and right-to-left.
7. Each telescope includes a laminated copy of the telescope user guide, an Audubon Society constellation book, a headlamp that projects a red light so as to preserve the user's night vision, and has software for finding certain stars and constellations in the night sky.
8. The telescope can be used by placing it on a sturdy, vibration free table and using the attached laser dot finder scope to aim at objects in the night sky that you would like to see in the eyepiece.
9. Please contact the Aldrich Astronomical Society, Inc. to discuss the details and current costs for a loaner telescope if your library is interested to learning more about this program. You can reach us by sending us an e-mail message to aldrichastro@live.com or by directly contacting the Library Telescope Program Coordinator, John C. Root at jroot60@charter.net or by telephone at 508-753-4228. Your library will be contacted to answer any questions you may have.



Figure 2: Do Not Look at the Sun Decal!



Figure 3: Correct Orientation Lunar Map

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