

FALL 2024

THE KOPERNIK CONSTELLATION

KOPERNIK OBSERVATORY & SCIENCE CENTER'S
SEASONAL NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the first issue of the Kopernik Constellation—Kopernik Observatory & Science Center's seasonal newsletter that highlights programs, projects, people, and more! It has been a whirlwind of events here at Kopernik! We finished our 32nd Link Summer Science Explorations in August, serving 200 students and moved right into the celebration of Kopernik's 50 years at the Binghamton DoubleTree in October! Here's all that we have been up to...

Look Up Dream Big Annual Fund Drive

This week we begin the Look Up Dream Big Annual Fund drive. Your annual contributions support our day-to-day operations, including the work our educators do to design and teach the many programs we offer families, students, and adults throughout the year. This year, with your support, we will be developing school outreach programs that we can take on the road with our new STEM van! We will celebrate our donors at the Winter Star Party on February 22, 2025. This year's event will be very special as we reassemble the Kopernik time capsule and set it into place to be opened in the year 2050. Visit [Kopernik Annual Drive](#) for more information.



ANDROMEDA



Reach for the Stars Anniversary Gala October 5, 2024

What a wonderful celebration it was! More than 170 friends of Kopernik came together to celebrate Kopernik's past and share our vision for the next 50 years. Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo and Senator Lea Webb joined us to share their congratulations and present proclamations from the state.

Broome County Legislator Dan Reynolds contributed a proclamation from Broome County. Binghamton Mayor, Jared Kraham welcomed our guests and spoke about his own experiences attending Kopernik as a student. Dr. M. Stanley Whittingham, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Nobel Laureate, concluded his address with a call for us to create the conditions for young people to become the next generation of innovators. Celebrants spanned three generations, from founding members to their grandchildren! Young people in the audience included Phoenix Sarton, the granddaughter of Kopernik Science Center's first director, Jay Sarton. Kopernik Observatory & Science Center is that bridge to the future and we are stronger than ever!

● Governor Hochul Awards Kopernik \$1,000,000

What an amazing Halloween treat! On October 31st, Governor Hochul visited Kopernik Observatory to present us with a check for \$1,000,000. This is a significant contribution towards the beginning of a capital campaign currently under development to upgrade and modernize the existing Kopernik campus. The Kopernik Board of Directors is actively engaged in developing this campaign and looks forward to sharing this vision with our community in 2025.



● STEM Van on the Way!

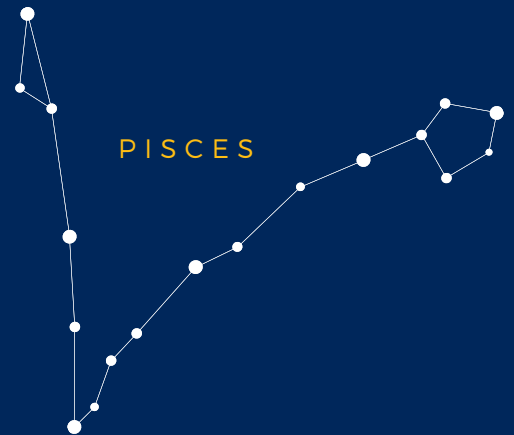
We can't wait to take Kopernik on the road! The generosity of a local foundation has made possible the purchase of a van to allow us to expand outreach to local and distant communities. While we love our beautiful, dark sky location in the hills of Vestal, we are ready to take Kopernik on the road. Stay tuned for news of the van's arrival!

● Honoring Valentina Kozlowski

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Valentina Kozlowski on October 17, 2024. Included in Kopernik's by-laws is our founding mission to recognize and advance the contributions of Broome County's Polish community. Valentina Kozlowski and her husband, Dr. Edward Kozlowski led Broome County's Polish community in the founding of Kopernik Observatory in 1973 to honor the 500th birthday of Polish astronomer, Mikolaj Kopernik who we know by his Latin name, Nicholas Copernicus. Like many non-profit organizations in the region, Kopernik Observatory came of age in the 1970s when Broome County was a growing center of technological innovation. We see this optimism coming back as the children and grandchildren of this community continue this civic minded tradition of giving, and as we welcome new families and friends to Broome County. Thank you, Valentina, for your many decades of support and love for Kopernik!

● 42nd Annual AstroFest 2024

AstroFest is an annual Star Party at Kopernik that features extraordinary speakers and night sky observing. More than 100 novice and veteran space enthusiasts spent two days together sharing their expertise and learning from each other. During AstroFest, the observatory campus is host to campers who enjoy night sky viewing until dawn.



● Friday Night Programs Going Strong!

The tradition of opening our doors on Friday nights continues for live presentations, followed by night sky viewing when the weather permits. Kopernik Observatory & Science Center is dedicated to promoting lifelong interest in the fields of science and technology. Our Friday night programs are not simply presentations, they are an opportunity for our community to gather, learn about, and reflect on innovations in STEM and their impact on our present and future. You can see upcoming Friday Programs listed on our [website](#). All of these programs are recorded and maintained on our [Kopernik YouTube](#) channel. Interested in presenting? Please contact our Executive Director, Drew Deskur.

2024-2025 School Year Programming Underway

This fall we have welcomed over 1,000 students to Kopernik to participate in educational programming aligned to New York State's Next Generation Science Standards. We often say that Kopernik Observatory & Science Center is more than just three domes on a hill. Our staff of educators design programs that enrich and extend what students learn in their science education.



But we are also three domes on a hill! For many students, seeing what an observatory looks like is literally "eye opening." We are so excited to have these opportunities to work with local districts!



HERA – The Ultimate Space Camping Trip!

Every fall we host an event celebrating women in STEM. This November 11th, more than 30 girls attended a full day workshop exploring the science and technology of building habitats on the Moon and Mars. The core of each of these workshops is a virtual visit with women who work in the field of space science.



This year, students met with team members of HERA, the Human Exploration Research Analog. This is a team of women and men who will live together for 45 days in a sealed artificial living habitat that simulates life on the Moon or Mars. The HERA program serves to prepare astronauts for the future of space exploration.

TAURUS



Kopernik on the Road

Kopernik's portable digital planetarium has been making the rounds. Educator and Board of Director member, Art Cacciola, recently traveled to Hoboken, New Jersey to share the Kopernik planetarium at the Shaping the Future of STEM in celebration of National STEM Day. Thank you to Visions for underwriting this program!

ARIES

Hocus Focus: A Haunting Night at the Observatory

A fall newsletter would not be complete without mentioning our annual Hocus Focus for Halloween. This year more than 200 children and parents joined us over two days for Halloween festivities of a scary and not so scary kind. Educators in their ghoulish garbs excited children with chilling science experiments, thrilling demonstrations, and a Spooky Universe planetarium show. Fun!

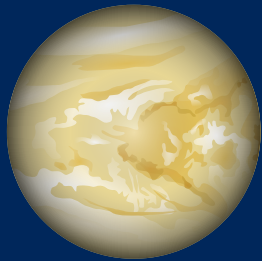


Seasonal Constellations

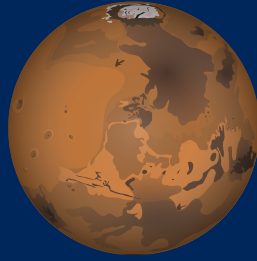
Did you notice the named constellations scattered throughout this newsletter? These are some of the constellations you can find in the night sky this season! We encourage you to head outside the next time it's clear to search for them. For guidance, Check out stellarium.org to access your very own virtual sky map or come visit us at Kopernik on a Friday night and we'll be your tour guide through the stars.

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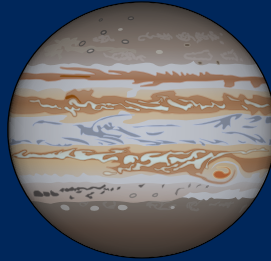
Planets Visible Naked Eye This Season



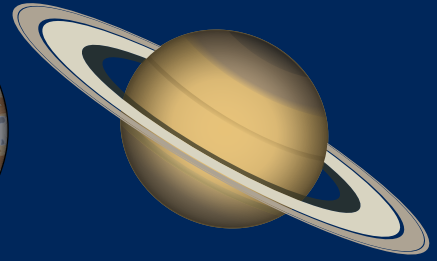
VENUS



MARS



JUPITER



SATURN

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