

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jupiter, Saturn to be visible during Observatory Open House

KOKOMO, Ind. — Stargazers can check out the crescent moon, as well as the planets Mercury, Venus, and Saturn, at a free Indiana University Kokomo Observatory open house on Sunday, September 8.

Patrick Motl, assistant professor of physics, will begin the open house at 8 p.m. with a talk about a nova in Delphinus that was discovered August 14. It is now fading away, he said.

“In a nova, material from one star in a binary pair lands on the surface of a white dwarf companion, and the materials builds up until it erupts in a nuclear explosion,” Motl said.

Visitors may then view the stars and planets until 10 p.m.; weather permitting, through the observatory's telescopes. In addition to the moon and planets, highlights in the evening sky include the Ring Nebula and color contrast double star Alberio.

The Observatory's telescopes are a six-inch Takahashi refracting telescope and a 16-inch Meade reflecting telescope mounted together. The Takahashi provides exceptionally sharp images of planets, while the Meade lets stargazers see fainter objects in the sky, due to its larger light collecting area.

The open house is free and open to the public in the Observatory, 105 E. Rebecca Lane. Free parking is available on campus.

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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