

News Release

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IU Kokomo Observatory to host final open house of 2012

KOKOMO, Ind. — The Indiana University Kokomo Observatory will host its final open house of 2012 from 8 to 10 p.m. Friday, December 21.

Stargazers will be able to see Jupiter, which reaches its annual peak in December, appearing in the east during evening twilight and dominating the sky all night.

Visitors will get the closest view possible of Jupiter and its moons through the Observatory's telescopes, which 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.

Mars will continue to be low in the southwest after sunset during December, appearing about 10 degrees above the horizon as the evening sky darkens. The red-orange object will be easy to see if you have an unobstructed view, moving eastward quickly and so remaining at about the same altitude every night. Mars will set about two hours after the sun all month.

The sun will be farthest south in Earth's sky at 6:12 a.m. EST on Friday, marking the start of winter in the Northern Hemisphere and summer in the Southern Hemisphere.

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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