

Star Gazing at Starr Garden

On Friday, October 3, Starr Garden Playground will be hosting our third "Star Party" where, given favorable conditions, we'll be taking our telescopes out into the night and onto



the field, along with our star charts and amber filter pocket lights, to observe the celestial display up close. We'll learn about astronomy, some mythology and probably a bit about optics as well. This ongoing program named "City Skies" is sponsored by Philadelphia's own [Franklin Institute](#) and is funded in various cities nationally by NASA.

You have to qualify as a site, but when Shara Gordon, the director at Starr Garden, attended the

reception at the Institute last February, the news was good. Starr Garden was chosen as a site and then presented with ten ready-to-assemble Galileo-type telescopes (with tripods), a sun spotter, books for star party attendees and a schedule for workshops from the Franklin Institute.

Our first "Star Party" was spent assembling the telescopes (it was simple, you just had to know convex from concave...). For the second one, we went out to the field when, even though it was overcast, Jupiter was spotted, as well as the amazing Saturn with its rings. Imagine that! Attendance has been pretty good and enthusiastic. We've had a talk and slide presentation given by visiting Institute representative Ted Williams, and we're now partnering with our local middle school science teachers from McCall School with the goal of allowing students more "hands-on" experience with astronomy.

If you're interested, stop by on October 3 at around 6:00 p.m. We're at 600 Lombard (that's 6th and Lombard). If you do, be sure to thank Shara Gordon, who contacted the Franklin Institute as soon as she heard about this program.

It's a great way to spend a Friday evening... star gazing.



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