

The Miami Valley Astronomical Society is pleased to announce its annual Telescope Fair which will be held on June 14th during the Apollo Rendezvous. The purpose of the fair is to carry on the long tradition of developing astronomical instruments for and amongst amateur astronomers.

One aspect of the Telescope Fair is to encourage innovation and excellence through competition. A second aspect of the fair is to educate and disseminate knowledge gained through the experience of the contestants.

Long before commercial telescopes were readily available amateurs were building their own telescopes and accessories. Amateur telescope makers have contributed much to the hobby of astronomy. We want to recognize those individuals who are carrying on that tradition by hand building their telescopes and astronomical instruments.

With commercial telescopes seeing widespread distribution at great values, modifying them has become a way of carrying on the ATM spirit. It seems like no telescope escapes modification of some sort. Because of that we would like to reward those who are developing and perfecting ways of enhancing commercial scopes and improving their performance.

With the advent of digital photography, it seems everyone has an interest in astrophotography. New for 2008, we're adding Astrophotography Setups to our list of categories. A great deal of time, effort, and financial resources can go into the setting up of a good astrophotography platform. The Astrophotography Setup contest is not so much about gear, but about how this gear is put together in innovative ways to allow for the successful capture of astronomical wonders. Special considerations will be given to those setups that push the boundaries of performance, cost, and innovation.

A special note: The Astrophotography Setup area will be cordoned off to protect your gear from unwanted exploration.

To summarize, the Categories are as follows

- 1) Hand Built Telescopes
- 2) Hand Built or Modified Astronomical Accessories
- 3) Modified Commercial Telescopes
- 4) Astrophotography Setups

Juried judging will take place on Saturday, June 14th. Please have scopes and accessories at the display area no later than 10:30 AM Saturday morning. The display area will be in the Tait Auditorium which is located on the second floor of the museum. (See here for a floor plan: <http://www.boonshoftmuseum.org/floorPlan.html>) There is a street level entrance on the second floor to make access easier. Also, the area is secured should participants desire to set up scopes on Friday night.

When you arrive on Saturday, please sign in with the Telescope Fair coordinator, Patrick Johnson, and select the category you would like to display in. At that time, you will be instructed as to when the judging will occur. Please be present with your entry during the juried judging to answer questions. Popular vote judging will occur throughout the day.

If you do not have a written description of your entry, you will be asked to write up a note card giving a brief explanation of any special features of your entry. This will be placed with your setup so observers can have a better idea of what your entry is all about.

Announcements of the winners will be made at the Apollo Rendezvous' awards presentations at the end of the event on Saturday and will be included in the July issue of MVAS' Amateur Astronomer newsletter.

A special note: If you should desire to only display your telescope and not participate in the competition, you are very welcome to do so.

Thanks to everyone for participating in this event!

Patrick Johnson