

WEST END

WILLIAMS BAY



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Around 60 students drawn from the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, the Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Chicago-based Orr Academy gathered outside historic Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay on Sept. 24 for GLAS Education's "Adventures in Infrared Astronomy" event.

Yerkes hosts GLAS Education's 'Lessons In Infrared Astronomy'

Sixty students from three school participate

Historic Yerkes Observatory and its expansive scenic grounds in Williams Bay were bustling with activity on Sept. 24 as GLAS Education introduced the secrets of infrared light to about 60 students from three different schools during an educational event.

Participating students also got a chance to visit the famed 40-inch Great Refractor telescope housed in Yerkes' Great Dome.

Called "Adventures in Infrared Astronomy," Williams Bay-based GLAS Education planned and organized the event. Participating students came from the Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan, the Janesville-based Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Orr Academy in Chicago according to GLAS Education Director Kate Meredith.

GLAS invited the three schools to send select students to experience the program's accessible stations, which used 3-D printed models, lights, sounds, vibrations and a large, colorful

parachute to teach attendees about the infrared spectrum and the telescope mirrors and lenses used to detect it.

The program was supported by \$10,000 in funding received through the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium at Carthage College in Kenosha.

GLAS staff and volunteers set up six accessible STEM education stations both inside and outside the observatory.

At each station, students learned the importance of infrared light to astronomy. Infrared light is invisible to the human eye but detectable to the right instruments. Able to penetrate interstellar gas and dust, it is an essential tool in astrophysics.

The event focused on NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) and the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). The goal was to make infrared astronomy accessible for the blind/low vision and deaf/hard of hearing students, but also to engage the students from Orr, who have some science background.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A multi-colored parachute was used to show the different sizes of telescopic lenses and mirrors during GLAS Education's Sept. 24 "Adventures in Infrared Astronomy" event at historic Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay. Around 60 students from the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, the Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Orr Academy participated in the event. The parachute activity seen here was designed by GLAS staffer Adam McCulloch and GLAS volunteer Ed Sadler. Here, Connie Gartner, a retired curriculum director at the Delavan-based Wisconsin School for the Deaf, leads students in stretching out the parachute to its full James Webb Space Telescope width.

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SCHOOLS

Fontana Elementary School enters into agreements with neighboring school districts

Budget hearing and annual meeting to be held Oct. 28

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Looking to collaboratively meet student needs, the Fontana Joint 8 School District Board of Education on Sept. 23 approved entering into service and tuition agreements with two neighboring West End school districts.

The Board of Education approved entering into an inter-governmental services agreement with Linn Joint 6 School District (Reek Elementary School) for Fontana School social worker Nikki Christensen to provide the Linn-based district with one hour per week of social work services.

"Our social worker will be spending an hour a week to support Reek School with some counseling needs," noted Fontana Joint 8 School District Administrator Steve Torrez.

Additionally, the Fontana Board of Education approved entering into a tuition agreement with the Walworth-based Walworth Joint 1 School District (Walworth Elementary School) to provide a Fontana Elementary School student with English Language Learner (ELL) support services.

"Our tuition agreement is to provide a student with the support needed at Walworth School, where there is more programming," Torrez said.

In other news on Sept. 23, the Board of Education approved the hiring of Tami Nottolini for the position of full-time special education paraprofessional.

Nottolini, who assists in both early childhood and special education programming, takes the place of Sue Johnson, who resigned this past summer.

Board members also approved the district's Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) mandated annual Seclusion and Restraint Report for 2023-2024.

"Our physical restraint and seclusion numbers were slightly higher than last year, however the number of students involved



Torrez

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FONTANA

Book club planned at Fontana

Input sought by Oct. 18 deadline

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The Fontana Public Library is interested in starting a monthly library-sponsored book club in November and is currently soliciting public input.

The library is proposing possible dates and times and is seeking public input: Wednesdays from 10-11 a.m. or 11 a.m. to noon, or Thursdays from 10-11 a.m. or 11 a.m. to noon.

Those interested in participating in the book club are asked to call the Fontana Public Library at 262-275-5107 by Friday, Oct. 18 and indicate their date and time preference for the proposed book club. Callers are also asked to leave their name and phone number.

Space in the book club will be limited.

More information

The Fontana Public Library is

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EDUCATION

Big Foot Board of Education approves background check procedure, new physical security upgrades

District annual meeting to be held Oct. 21

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A focus on enhancing school safety and security highlighted the agenda of the Big Foot Union High School Board of Education when it met on Sept. 16.

Looking to expand the scope of its background checks of prospective volunteers, coaches and employees to provide a more

robust and comprehensive nationwide screening, board members approved contracting with the Green Bay-based Wisconsin Drug Testing Consortium (WDTC), which also maintains offices in Oshkosh and Appleton.

In today's world, background check requirements by school systems and businesses alike



Parker



Andersen



Sheppard

are a cost-effective means of preventing potential problems before they develop.

Established in 2001 as a veteran-owned small business,

accredited Certified Third Party Administrator (C-TPA) WDTC specializes in drug testing and background searches and is a member of the Drug and Alcohol Testing Industry Association (DATIA), Substance Abuse Program Administrators Association (SAPAA) and the Better Business Bureau (BBB).

WDTC provides access to a national system that scans records in all 50 states in fulfilling

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AGING

Walworth County ADRC announces upcoming Memory Café gatherings

'The stigma of dementia is left at the door'

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The Walworth County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) has announced the October schedule of Memory Café gatherings across Walworth County and at Burlington in



Sawyers

western Racine County. Memory Café is a social gathering for those who are experiencing early stage dementia, mild memory loss or mild cognitive impairment (MCI), and for their families, friends or care partners. Memory Café is a place to have fun, share expe-

riences and stay socially connected.

"Memory Cafés are social opportunities where the stigma of dementia is left at the door and everybody can feel comfortable and not be embarrassed about things like outbursts, wandering or incontinence issues," said Walworth County ADRC Dementia Care Specialist Jake Sawyers. "All of that is stuff that people really shouldn't be worried about. The stigma of the

disease ... can lead to self-isolation of both the individual and the caregiver. These Memory Cafés are opportunities to get out of the house, get out of those four walls, and participate in a fun activity that is designed for all cognitive levels ... It's also kind of an informal support group for the caregivers to create social connections with people that are in similar situations..."

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