

## YOUR SUPPORT

The Custer Institute is a 501(c)(3) New York State educational non-profit. It is the oldest public observatory on Long Island, established in 1927. The Institute operates on public support (proceeds from Saturday night sessions, events, dues, small donations, etc); it is not endowed, nor is it government owned or sponsored. Please consider making a donation or showing your support by becoming a member.



## BECOME A CUSTER MEMBER

### *You are invited to become a member!*

Join us for members-only functions, trips and social events. You'll be entitled to a vote in the affairs of the Institute and will receive a subscription to our newsletter, The Custer Comment.

Custer membership can mean endless hours of stimulating conversation, kinship, and camaraderie. Call or ask on your next visit, or see the Membership link on our webpage.

## THE 25" OBSESSION TELESCOPE

Our 25 inch, f/5 (125" 3175mm focal length) Obsession is a Newtonian-style reflecting telescope with a Dobsonian mount. It was put on loan to us on October 16, 2008 from Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) in Riverhead.

The telescope, nearly 11' tall, is the largest one in any public observatory on Long Island. Senior Observatory Staff Members have made a number of modifications to the telescope including the redesign of the optics which allows for observing from standing level (*versus perched upon a tall ladder, as is usually necessary when looking through the eyepiece of a large Dobsonian*). All the modifications were designed so that they can be removed and the telescope returned to its original configuration.

Join us as we celebrate not only being the oldest public observatory on Long Island (est. 1927), but the one with the biggest telescope as well!

## SPECIAL GROUP VISITS & OUTREACH

The Custer Institute is all about education and outreach. One of the ways we achieve this goal is by making arrangements for groups to visit our observatory on special nights. The long days and short nights during summer usually mean that group arrangements are limited to once each month from late September through late April.

We offer a talk, show slides, answer questions, and then take in the wonders of the night sky (weather permitting) with our telescopes and binoculars.

Planning a visit with your scouts or school group has the advantage of enabling us to attend to their interest on a more personal level than would be possible during our public viewing sessions on Saturday nights.

If you would like to find out more about visiting the observatory or having us come to you, email us at [visitcuster@gmail.com](mailto:visitcuster@gmail.com) call us at 765-2626 to begin arranging a special group visit.

**Thank you for your interest in  
The Custer Institute.  
We hope to see you soon!**

## YOUR VISIT TO CUSTER OBSERVATORY



(631) 765-2626

1115 MAIN BAYVIEW ROAD  
SOUTHOLD, NEW YORK 11971

[HTTP://CUSTEROBSERVATORY.ORG](http://CUSTEROBSERVATORY.ORG)

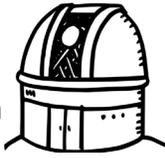
*The Custer Institute and Observatory is Long Island's oldest public observatory (est. 1927). Open to the public every Saturday evening from dark until midnight, our staff of volunteers will give you a tour of the facilities and the night sky (weather permitting) through our powerful telescopes and binoculars.*

*Custer has frequent lectures, classes, concerts, art exhibits and other special events. Consider our observatory for your next meeting or theme party.*

## THE FACILITIES

The facilities include the following:

- A 22' diameter dome atop the third story of the main building which contains a 25" Obsession telescope on loan from Suffolk County Community College



- A ground-based observatory shed which contains a large binocular telescope on loan from Alarico Verticchio (a Custer member who designed and built the telescope) and a 14" Celestron telescope
- Several telescopes that are set up on the lawn.

On clear Saturday nights, many or all of these telescopes are in operation and manned by the Institute's volunteer staff. **Don't hesitate to ask questions!**

The Institute is also host to the observatories of two of Long Island's oldest astronomy clubs: the Amateur Observers' Society of New York (**AOS**) and the Astronomical Society of Long Island (**ASLI**). Both clubs often participate in Custer's Saturday night public observing sessions.

On clear, dark nights (especially during weeks of the new moon) other Custer members often set up their own telescopes on the Institute's grounds and welcome you to look through their eyepieces. In addition to astronomical observing sessions, the Institute also offers lectures, classes, concerts, and other events. The latest information on these events can be found on our website.

The main building contains a meeting room where you can have refreshments and chat with members and visitors. In addition, you can view vintage telescopes and interesting photographs dating from when the Institute was built. There is also a lecture hall that serves as an art/photo gallery; and there is a kitchen, gift shop, and bathroom. Custer also maintains a collection of scientific and astronomical artifacts, as well as its library.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The dome can only accommodate a maximum of 15 people at a time. Groups are allowed up into the dome approximately every 20 minutes. On busy nights, you will be given a ticket which will admit you to the dome and to other telescopes. In exchange, we suggest a donation to offset operation expenses: \$5 per adult and \$3 per child (more if possible, less if necessary - Custer never turned away a curious mind).

The number of visitors to the observatory can vary widely. The greatest number of visitors attend when there is a special celestial event (meteor showers, eclipses, etc.) Under such circumstances, expect to wait for an hour or more to visit the dome. The largest number of visitors can be expected from the time the telescopes open until approximately 10:00 p.m. If you can, try to arrive later. The last group of visitors allowed up into the dome is at 11:30 p.m.

Sun	Star
Planet	Nibiru
Moon	Meteor
Comet	Orbit



While you wait to visit the 22' dome you can view a documentary on astronomy, observe through the observatory's other telescopes or enjoy refreshments and chat with members.

The Institute is surrounded by Southold Town's arboretum and wildflower field which you may also enjoy visiting.

Please note that the dome is on the third floor of the main building. There is no elevator, the stairs to the dome are rather steep, and the pathway and grounds are sparsely lit to preserve night vision so you can get the most out of your observing experience. We regret that the facilities are not currently handicapped accessible.

## WHAT WE EXPECT OF YOU

Please be patient and mindful that our staff is volunteers, mostly amateur astronomers; they are not paid professionals. All will do their best to make your visit pleasant and educational.

Refreshments are available in the meeting room. Please do not bring food or drink into the lecture hall, museum, library, dome or observatories. The Institute reserves the right to refuse admission to those who seem to be intoxicated or disruptive.



If you park in the small driveway that is adjacent to the Institute's grounds, please enter and leave cautiously; there are children, pedestrians, and telescopes everywhere!

**We ask that you enter and leave with only your parking lights on to preserve observing conditions!**

The Institute is in a residential neighborhood so please respect the quiet and privacy of our neighbors.

### Parents

Please be sure to supervise your child at all times. We ask that you hold your child if they need to stand on a ladder to view through the eyepiece of a telescope. And please be sure to have your child refrain from touching any of the equipment.

### Pets

While most members and staff are animal lovers, for the comfort of other visitors we ask that you refrain from bringing your pet to the Institute.

