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Ferndale Library Joins International Telescope Program

Launch Event: Thursday, November 11 at 6:30 pm

Facilitated by FADL's Youth services and the Warren Astronomical Society.

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Ferndale Library Launches Astronomy Program This Fall Lending Telescopes to Youth

FERNDALE, Mich. (October 22, 2021)-- Ferndale Library's Youth Services team is constantly connecting its young readers to books that bolster early literacy skills, but this fall, they'll be connecting kids to the cosmos with their new telescope lending program. Ferndale's Youth Librarians recently added three Orion brand StarBlast telescopes to their circulating collection. These special items are geared toward kids of all ages, intended to encourage an interest in science and astronomy.

The library will be unveiling the telescopes during a launch event on Thursday, November 11, at 6:30 pm. Volunteers from the Warren Astronomical Society generously donated their time to help modify these telescopes to make them suitable for checkout. Representatives from the organization will be at the library to help host the launch event and teach patrons how to use the telescopes. If the weather permits, attendees can participate in some stargazing outside. Should there be more interested parties than telescopes, we'll draw names out of a hat to decide who gets to take the telescopes home first.

"Don't let all of our big city light pollution discourage you," says Head of Youth Services Jordan Wright, "because with these powerful little telescopes you'll get stellar views of the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, and moon craters."

Patrons who have a Ferndale Library card will be able to check out one of the new telescopes on a first-come/first-serve basis, available at the Youth Services Desk in Ferndale's Kids Corner; children can use their own card but will require a parent or legal guardian to be present at check out. The telescopes come with an instruction manual, a moon map, a pocket guide for spotting constellations, and an LED light. Patrons can borrow these telescopes for two weeks at a time.

The new telescopes are the first big step in Ferndale's efforts to build a "library of things," i.e., circulating items other than books/movies/music such as gadgets, tools, and assorted household items.

These easy-to-use telescopes have 4 ½ inch reflectors and are designed to be more durable than the average optical observational instrument--i.e., kid-friendly! This announcement also

means that Ferndale is joining a broader, international library telescope program initiated in 2008 by Marc Stowbridge and the New Hampshire Astronomical Society, a program that has been successfully launched in 40+ states in the US, as well as libraries in the UK.

This new telescope program ties into the library's ongoing efforts to bolster hands-on STEAM learning, fostering scientific literacy and spurring interest in astronomy. Many young patrons have never had the opportunity to look through an authentic, state-of-the-art telescope. So this is a chance to experience the wonder and awe that comes with looking through the lens to the stars and planets of our solar system.

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