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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LASM to Host Celebration of International Observe the Moon “Day”

BATON ROUGE - The Louisiana Art & Science Museum is planning a day of out-of-this-world hands-on activities and planetarium shows for its visitors on **Saturday, October 5** in celebration of **International Observe the Moon “Day.”** Hands-on activities will be offered the Bert S. Turner Family Atrium from 10 AM until 2 PM. The lineup of lunar-themed planetarium shows, including ***Apollo 11: First Steps Edition***, will run until 5 PM.

“We are excited offer a fun day of activities and shows to kick-off this celebration of lunar science and exploration,” said Sheree Westerhaus, LASM’s Director of Operations & Planetarium. “This year we really have a lot to celebrate. Not only is it the fiftieth year since we touched the surface of the moon, but NASA also has plans to return to the Moon with the Artemis mission in 2024. This mission is so exciting for us and our region because the core stage rocket hardware is being welded at the Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans and it will be tested at the Stennis Space Center in nearby Mississippi. When Artemis lands, our American astronauts will set foot where no human has ever been: the Moon’s South Pole!”

Started in 2009 after the success of NASA’s Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, International Observe the Moon Night occurs in September or October when the Moon is beginning its First Quarter phase. According to NASA, the best area to observe the Moon is typically along its terminator (the line between night and day) where shadows are at their longest. On the night of October 5, the Moon will be almost perfectly cut in half with 48% of its surface obscured in shadow.

Before each of the planetarium shows at 10 AM, 12 PM, 2 PM, and 4 PM, one lucky visitor will receive a **Galileoscope**, a modern refractor telescope similar to the model created by Galileo Galilei in 1609. Though relatively simple in its design, this small telescope is capable of producing 25-50 times magnifications.

“Being lightweight and easy to use, these are perfect for backyard moongazing,” said Westerhaus. “It is our mission at LASM to spark the desire to create, explore, and discover; hopefully this giveaway will do just that for our visitors!”

In addition to the hands-on activities and planetarium shows, a special display of Apollo 11-era artifacts will be on display in Science Station. Among these items specifically designed for moon travel is an

Intravehicular Helmet like those used during the Apollo 11 training and examples of the Hasselblad Cameras and Omega Speedmaster “Moonwatches” selected by NASA for use during the actual mission.

“Many of our visitors have only experienced the Apollo 11 mission through film; these objects present a more tangible perspective and will aid in connecting them with this important moment in our history,” said Elizabeth Weinstein, LASM’s Director of Interpretation & Chief Curator. “We are very thankful to **Greg Milneck** for sharing these historic items with our community. I’m sure that many will be surprised to learn that, at this very moment, there are twelve Hasselblad cameras just like those on display here that are still resting on the surface of the Moon!”

For more information, visit lasm.org.

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Image: International Observe the Moon Night always takes place on the night of a First Quarter Moon. Because of the long shadows near the terminator (the line of shadow between night and day) features, like craters, are especially prominent. This image is licensed under the Creative Commons [Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.

About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum

A nonprofit organization housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum enhances the understanding and appreciation of art and science for general audiences and students by presenting unique, educational and entertaining experiences that encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge. More information about the Art & Science Museum is available at lasm.org.

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