

Seaside Park Environmental Advisory Committee

Stargazing Event Summary - June 15, 2024

We express our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated members, Pat Urso and Barbara Silvi, for their invaluable assistance during this Stargazing event. Special thanks also go to Brian Tracy, who volunteered at the Beach 2 entrance, skillfully directing attendees. The Villano Group's support in ticket distribution was instrumental in ensuring the success of this event.

The stars of the night were ASTRA (Astronomical Society of the Toms River Area), who brought approximately 15 telescopes, including digital ones. The weather cooperated beautifully, blessing us with clear skies for optimal stargazing.

Key Details:

Ticket Distribution and Promotion: Our committee printed 14 flyers posted in establishments within Seaside Park. Additionally, we distributed 100 tickets at the Villano office, and approximately 75 people attended. Admission was free.

Committee Costs: The total cost to the committee was \$250.98, covering the purchase of 100 magnets from Blue Bee Printing (\$130.98) and a \$120.00 fee to Island Beach State Park for the application and special use permit.

Entrance Fee: Island Beach State Park typically charges an entrance fee per car. Although the Governor waived entrance fees in recent years, it will be reinstated starting July 1, 2024. We should explore transitioning to a small charge to cover this fee or notify ticket holders about the entrance fee.

Location Challenges: Holding events at the southern end of the Beach 2 parking lot, the darkest spot at IBSP, poses challenges for attendees in terms of parking and navigating unlit surroundings. Although, this is necessary for optimal viewing.

Considerations for Future Events:

Informative Sheet: For upcoming events, consider providing attendees with a printed sheet containing event details, specific location information, and helpful tips (e.g., bringing beach chairs for post-telescope viewing and bug spray). Additionally, direct them to ASTRA's website: The Astronomical Society of the Toms River Area.

Guest Speaker: Jim Webster, President of the ASTRA club, has offered to speak at one of our events on

Finally, the magnet give-a-way was not promoted and may not be necessary in the future.