

Galilean Nights Event ID: gn495

Number of telescopes: 4

Number of organisers: 4

Number of attendees: 70

Event photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/43875719@N08/4090906244/in/pool-galileannights>
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Event Report:

"Galilean Nights" event took place in Poltava gravimetric observatory (PGO) on October 22. It was organized by Roman Kostenko and Yuri Zaiets, members of the "Society of Amateur Astronomers in Poltava" (POLA). This event is a very special for our local astronomic society, because we have established it not a long time ago (in summer 2009); hence the "Galilean Nights" was the first large public event that we have organized. And, although I may be immodest, I shall say that it was a significant event for amateur astronomy in Poltava, and it was the only one IYA-2009 event in our city. We also need to thank the professional astronomers, employees of PGO – Mykola F. Tyshchuk and Boris Ph. Sincheskul; without their help this event could not be as much successful as it was. Before the event has started, it was announced in 3 local newspapers (among them, "Vechirnia Poltava") and also in 13 schools, universities & other educational institutes of Poltava. Thus we expected for teachers, schoolchildren, students and other citizens to come.

A bit unexpectedly, quite many people (circa 70) have attended our event. Therefore all four of us (organizers) were busy all evening long, from 17:30 to 20:15. At the start (it was exactly the time of sunset, hence some time left yet before darkness) we have gathered near the main entrance to the PGO, where M.F.Tyshchuk has told a long and interesting story about the observatory, its main areas of scientific research and the astronomic phenomena related with it. Soon the dusk began and it was the time for observations. We had used 4 instruments: 2 observatory refractors (160 & 200 mm) and 2 amateur telescopes (76mm Newton and 60mm refractor).

Need to say a few words about the weather... It was partly cloudy – far away from ideal, but we could expect it to be worse. In total, we had some 1...1,5 hours of valuable observing time, although most of the observations were done through the gaps in Stratocumulus clouds. But for some short times the sky cleared up to 80%, so everybody enjoyed a nice view of autumnal constellations and even a faint glow of Milky Way (from the city centre). We couldn't see the Moon, as it was low & obstructed with clouds, but on the other hand, we had a great view of the "main target" – Jupiter with all 4 telescopes. By the way, we were lucky to see the occultation of Io at 19:20 EEST when the number of Galilean moons reduced to 3. Other objects of public viewing were M31, chi & h Persei, binary stars in UMa and Lyr, M13, and the star patterns in Perseus. We are glad that such a large number of people had a great opportunity to get more knowledge about astronomy, and we hope that this event will be a good start for our amateur astronomers' society in collaboration with schools of Poltava.