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The Leonid Meteor Shower

Look Skyward November 19 In The Early Morning Hours To Catch The Leonid Meteor Shower. Astronomers predict the potential of a spectacular event

One of the most exciting astronomical events viewed with the naked eye is the sighting of a "shooting star." What are commonly called shooting stars are not stars at all, but rather meteors - tiny particles entering the Earth's atmosphere from space and vaporizing in a burst of light. Each November when Earth passes through the stream of debris from Comet Tempel-Tuttle, the Leonid Meteor Shower occurs. This year, Chicago area residents may have the opportunity to experience a spectacular shower that may match the breathtaking storm that many viewers around the world enjoyed in 2001.

The Leonids, so-named because their path through the sky can be traced back to a point in the direction of the constellation Leo, the Lion. Approximately every 33 years the Leonid Meteor shower becomes a breathtaking meteor storm -- capable of illuminating the night sky with thousands of meteors per hour. Astronomers predict that the height of the storm over North America in 2002 could possibly generate 40 meteors every minute -- over 2,400 per hour!

Astronomers generally advise sky watchers wanting to view meteor showers to seek out a dark sky site as far away from the city lights as possible in order to maximize their viewing experience. This year's Leonids occur when the nearly full Moon will light up the sky, causing it to be fairly bright everywhere. The peak period in Chicago should occur at approximately 4:30 a.m. on November 19, 2002 when the Moon will be low in the west.

Media Note:

Adler Astronomer, Mark Hammergren is available for interviews pre-event. Please call 312-322-0524 for further information.

MUSEUM HOURS

September 3-December 24
Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Special Holiday Hours:
Friday, November 29, Thursday, December 26- Sunday, January 5, 2003 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Normal schedule resumes:
Monday, January 6, 2003
Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

On the first Friday of each month the Adler offers special programs with extended hours from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

REGULAR ADMISSION FEES

Ultimate Universe Adventure is \$18.00 for adults, \$17.00 for seniors 65 and older and \$16.00 for children 4 - 17. This package includes admission and the choice of two sky shows.

Galaxy Passport is \$13.00 for adults, \$12.00 for seniors 65 and older and \$11.00 for children 4 - 17. This package includes admission and choice of sky shows.

The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum is the first planetarium in the Western Hemisphere. Its astronomy programs have reached over 35 million people during the past 72 years. Nine state-of-the-art exhibition galleries located in the stunning new Sky Pavilion and the recently renovated landmark 1930s building present modern space exploration along with the history of astronomy. The world's first StarRider™ Theater, the most technologically advanced, audience-interactive planetarium, fuels the imagination of visitors during virtual flights through the cosmos. With a staff of over 200, the Adler pursues its mission to present the human quest to better understand the universe. Adler scientists and historians, who hold joint appointments at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, are working at the forefront of research in astronomy and its fascinating history. The Adler is leading the way into the new "Space Millennium."