

Grand Opening - Astronomy Discovery Center Lowell Observatory - Flagstaff, Arizona Saturday, November 16, 2024 • 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Diana Gabaldon will be a special guest speaker at the grand opening of the new Astronomy Discovery Center at Lowell Observatory. Other speakers will include Nicole Stott, NASA Space Shuttle Astronaut and Alan Stern, Principal Investigator of NASA's New Horizons mission to Pluto!

A family-friendly, educational event that is also fun!

Image at right: Kevin Schindler, historian for Lowell Observatory, with Diana.

Paid tickets required for entry, purchased in advance or at the door. See below.

Venue and Host:

Lowell Observatory

1400 West Mars Hill Road

Flagstaff, Arizona

928 774 3358

Email: info@lowell.edu

Venue Website: <https://lowell.edu>



Come and celebrate the grand opening of the Marley Foundation Astronomy Discovery Center at historic Lowell Observatory with Diana!

Witness the historic ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Astronomy Discovery Center, and be among the first to experience the cutting-edge, 40,000-square-foot facility. There will be many fun activities for kids and adults, free previews, special celebrity guests, food and drinks, science demonstrations, telescope viewing, and more.

(So many things to see and do, it is a good idea to read through the entire schedule and activities below to help make your plans for the day.)

Keynote Celebrity Talks in the Great Planetary Hall:

Don't miss these talks by three very prestigious speakers to celebrate the opening of the Marley Foundation Astronomy Discovery Center (ADC):



3:00 p.m. – Nicole Stott, NASA Space Shuttle Astronaut and engineer. Ms. Stott served as a flight engineer on Expeditions 20 and 21 to the International Space Station (ISS), and was a mission specialist on STS-128 and STS-133 shuttle missions. Come meet a real American astronaut and hero! *Click on Nicole Stott's image at right to view her bio on Wikipedia.*

4:00 p.m. – Dr. Alan Stern, Principal Investigator, NASA's New Horizons mission to Pluto and beyond. Come and hear about the ten-year journey to Pluto, the fascinating dwarf planet and its moons, a history-making mission! New Horizons has also ventured further into the Kuiper Belt to investigate the icy bodies of the outer Solar System in its extended mission. Dr. Stern is the science leader of this historic mission! *Click to read Dr. Stern's biography on the Southwest Research Institute's website.*



5:00 p.m. – Diana Gabaldon, Ph.D., bestselling author of the OUTLANDER series of novels and television series. Diana's great-grandfather, Stanley Sykes, designed, engineered and built the telescope at Lowell Observatory used to discover Pluto in 1930 (by Clyde Tombaugh). A third-generation native of Flagstaff, Diana has deep roots and family history in Northern Arizona.

Tickets:

Tickets for entry may be purchased in advance or at the door. Adult tickets range from \$15 to \$35 with discounts available for local citizens (with ID), members of the military, AAA, senior discounts, etc. Children's' tickets (ages 5 to 17) range from \$10 to \$20 each. Children who are 4 years old and younger are admitted for free.

[Click here to buy tickets in advance.](#)

Full Schedule for Saturday, November 16:

Please check with the venue's website or when you arrive for any changes or updates to the schedule below.

10:00 a.m. – **Early check-in.** There will be two separate lines: one for attendees with pre-purchased tickets, and a second for purchasing tickets at the door. (They ask that you please be sure to have your tickets open on your smart phone and ready to scan, if you are using the digital form.) Of course, you can arrive later if you choose to.

10:30 a.m. – **Ribbon cutting ceremony for the ADC** with brass quartet. Opening remarks from Observatory sole trustee **Lowell Putnam**, **Flagstaff mayor Becky Daggett**, and other public officials. Once the ceremony is complete, doors will open guests may begin exploring the exhibit halls of the ADC and participating in other scheduled activities.

11:00 a.m. – **Doors open to the new Astronomy Discovery Center, and programming begins!**

1:00 p.m. – **Diverse Universe Wall Dedication with Writing Contest Winner Readings**, on the Astronomy Discovery Center's Second Floor

3:00 p.m. – **Nicole Stott, a retired NASA Space Shuttle Astronaut and engineer.**

4:00 p.m. – **Dr. Alan Stern, Principal Investigator, NASA New Horizons mission to Pluto.** *At right, an artist's conception of New Horizons traveling through space.*

5:00 p.m. – **Diana Gabaldon, Ph.D., best-selling author of the OUTLANDER series of novels and television series.**

What To See and Do – Continuous Drop-In Activities:

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. – **Fun Activities and Booths for children and adults.** Dark Sky Adaptation Plaza. Participants include:

- Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition
- Coconino Astronomical Society
- Hozhoni Foundation Arts and Crafts Table
- Rondough's Mini-Donuts

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. – **Open House for the Pluto Dome, Clark Dome, and Rotunda Museum.**

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. – **Beer Garden** on the Rooftop Terrace

Solar Viewing and Stargazing:

11:00 a.m. to Dusk – **Solar Viewing** (View our Sun safely and in detail!)- Giovale Open Deck Observatory and Dark Sky Planetarium

Dusk to 10 p.m. – **View Celestial Wonders in the Night Sky through Lowell telescopes** – Giovale Open Deck Observatory

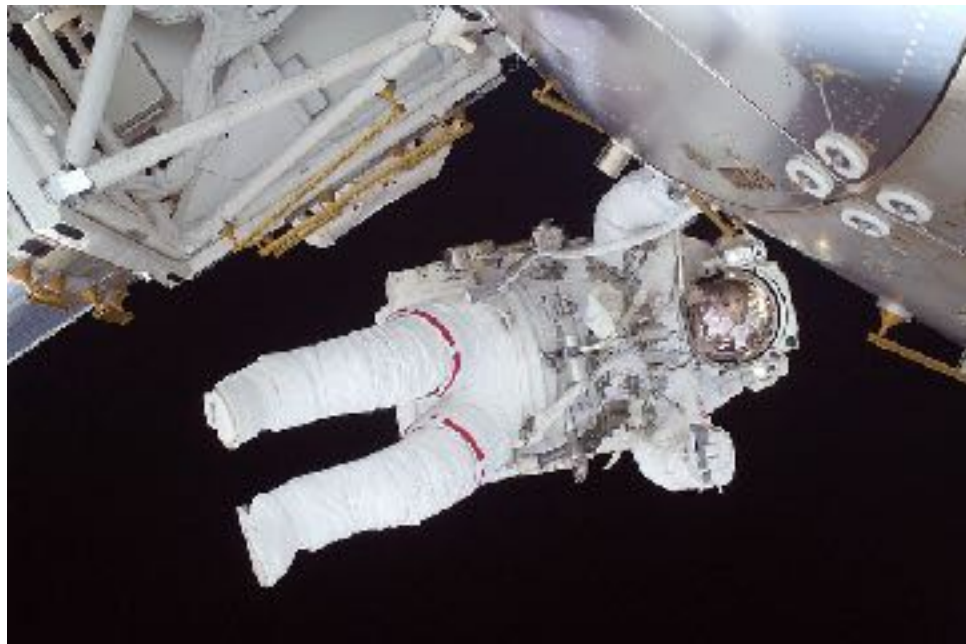
Special Shows and Tours:

1:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 4:30 p.m. **“In Focus: The Story of Pluto”** will be shown in the Historic Pluto Dome

1:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 4:30 p.m. **“In Focus: Origins of Lowell Observatory”** will be shown in the Historic Pluto Dome

4 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. **“Imagine the Universe”** Live Show times in the Lowell Universe Theater. Separate tickets required for each person at these shows.

8 p.m. and 9 p.m. – **Rooftop Stargazing Tour** – Dark Sky Planetarium.
Note that the new Astronomy Discovery Center will be open from now on, in case you cannot come on November 16! Happy stargazing and planet watching!



Nicole Stott during a space walk on STS-128!