



International Observe the Moon Night

B. Hsu (1), L. Bleacher (2) D.Daou (3) B. Day (4) A. Jones (2) B. Mitchell (5) A. Shaner (6) S. Shipp (6)
(1) SSAI, Maryland, USA, Brooke.C.Hsu@nasa.gov +00113012861486 (2) SSAI, Maryland, USA (3) Lockheed Martin, Mountain View, CA (4) Planner's Collaborative, Mountain View, CA (5) NASA MSFC, Huntsville, AL (6) Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston, TX

Abstract

The inaugural "International Observe the Moon Night" (InOMN) will take place on 18 September 2010. It will be the first of an ongoing annual campaign, the goal of which is to engage lunar science and education communities, our partner networks, amateur astronomers, space enthusiasts, and the general public in annual lunar observation campaigns that share the excitement of lunar science and exploration. Members of the public are encouraged to host their own InOMN events, and astronomy clubs, museums, schools, or other groups can find helpful resources and share information about InOMN events they are organizing on the InOMN website (<http://observethemoonnight.org>). We will share images, feedback, and lessons learned from the 2010 InOMN event in order to encourage the planning and hosting of InOMN events in 2011. The theme for InOMN on 8 October 2011 is "The Moon Around the World: What Does the Moon Mean to You?" and will focus on the cultural and societal significance of the Moon from across the globe.

1. Introduction

Elements of International Observe the Moon Night include a central InOMN website, support of an InOMN Tweet-up, an InOMN Photography Contest, and the recruitment of external partnerships. Each of the 2010 events serves as a pilot program where we will evaluate the project's infrastructure, the activities presented and materials disseminated during the events, and the success of the observational contest and Tweet-up efforts. The 2010 InOMN includes a lunar photography contest for the general public that is supported by the LunnFlickr website (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/lunr/>). Participants are encouraged to submit their own images of the Moon. Voting for the best image is conducted through MyMoon (<http://www.lpi.usra.edu/mymoon>), and the winning image will be used on 2011 InOMN

promotional materials. In the future, we will compile the favorite images into calendars, pop-up banner stands, screen savers, books, or other products that will maintain a high level of enthusiasm for submitting excellent lunar images.



Figure 1: The International Observe the Moon Night Logo.

2. InOMN Website

All information about InOMN is supplied on a central website (<http://observethemoonnight.org>). It is a "one-stop-shop" for everything related to InOMN. The website displays the date and theme of the current year's InOMN, general information about the event and the Moon, and specific information about individual InOMN events, including locations (with an interactive map) and schedules of activities. Links to LunnFlickr, Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, InOMN merchandise, and other resources related to InOMN are also available. For example, all the supportive products created and designed for this event, such as logos, lithographs, star finder and a lunar finder, calendars, activities lists, and a speakers bureau, is provided on the website for free for the public to print and use during their local lunar party. This will also help facilitate international participation by allowing various countries to translate and disseminate the products and resources in their own languages in order to support their country's national effort. Members of the public are encouraged to host their own InOMN events, and the website will

make InOMN as easily accessible and widely distributable as possible. The InOMN website provides a step-by-step guide to hosting an event as well as activities and materials for the event. InOMN Kits will include downloadable templates of advertising fliers, Moon maps, suggestions for activities that are conducted at national events, and templates for additional materials that are distributed at national events, such as Moon calendar journals. Information about the Moon and links to additional lunar information, educational activities, and resources are also available on the InOMN website. After InOMN, we will request each host to fill out an evaluation form to assess the success of their event, how it could be improved in the future, and what other resources they could use to make the following year's InOMN even better. After events, pictures of enthusiastic participants engaging in InOMN activities are posted on the InOMN website to demonstrate what worked well at successful InOMN events that hosts could include in future InOMN events, and advertise InOMN to site visitors.

3. InOMN Products

Educational materials can enrich the experience of participants at InOMN events. Moon maps, with an image of the Moon in the phase it is in on the night of that year's InOMN event is available for download from the InOMN website for local events. Easily observable features and other regions of interest are highlighted on the maps, and labeled for easy reference. Information about these features is provided on the back of the maps. Moon maps will allow participants to look up the names of places they see through telescopes, engage them between activities at InOMN events as they look for other labeled features, and act as reference materials for lunar observations after the events. Additional information and images of each labeled feature is provided on the InOMN website, so participants can continue to learn about what they saw on InOMN after the main event. Generic advertising materials, templates for site-specific advertising materials, Moon maps, and Moon observation journals are packaged together into InOMN Kits that are freely available for download on the InOMN website. They are available to anyone hosting an InOMN event to print and distribute, and may also be of interest and use to educators and the general public throughout the year.

4. InOMN 2011: “The Moon Around the World: What Does the Moon Mean to You?”

From various interpretations of the lunar “face,” early pictograms of the Moon’s phases, or to the use of the lunar cycle for festivals or harvests, the Moon has an undeniable influence on human civilization. We have chosen the 2011 InOMN theme to provide an opportunity for individuals to share their personal or cultural connections to the Moon. For 2011, the InOMN website will include a ‘lunar bulletin board’ where InOMN participants can post pictures and share stories of what the Moon means to them. The 2011 InOMN contest will encourage people to submit their works of art, poems, short stories, or music about the Moon all centered around the theme “What does the Moon mean to you?” As with the winners of previous contests, winning entries will be incorporated into the following year’s InOMN events.

5. Conclusions

The InOMN engages the lunar science and education communities, amateur astronomers, space enthusiasts, and the general public in an annual lunar observation campaign that shares the excitement of lunar science and exploration. Additionally, InOMN enables the public to maintain its curiosity about the Moon and gain a better understanding of the Moon's formation, its evolution, and its place in the sky. Whether it's by hosting your own event, submitting entries to our contests, or just observing the Moon in your own back yard, we encourage everyone to become involved in International Observe the Moon Night.