

Contact: Timothy Dey, M.D.  
The Dey Group, Inc.  
[dr.dey@deygroup.com](mailto:dr.dey@deygroup.com)  
[www.deygroup.com](http://www.deygroup.com)

948 Kings Hwy  
Lincoln Park, MI 48146  
Phone (313) 383-0582

HJR Observatory

# Press Release

Timothy Dey, M.D. and Lincoln Park Public Schools

Proudly announce the “First Light” rededication ceremony of the  
Hector J. Robinson Astronomical Observatory

WHEN - September 15, 2009 - 1 PM

WHERE - HJR Observatory: 1701 Champaign Rd. Lincoln Park MI 48146

(NE corner of football field / track complex)

WHO - Lincoln Park Superintendent Randy Kite and L.P. School Board members, teachers, and staff, Wayne County Commissioner Ilona Varga, L.P. Mayor Frank Vaslo, L.P. council persons, members of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club (F.A.A.C.), Contractor J.P. Griggs (Lions Club), the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science students of middle school teacher Leo McMaster, and the general public.

WHAT – Ribbon-cutting ceremony, brief remarks describing the history, contents and abilities of the renovated observatory, thanks to contributors, and presentation of the observatory to the students of Lincoln Park Schools, its citizens, and the Downriver public at large with an interest in amateur astronomy. Additional activities will include tours of the renovated observatory, the chance to view solar sunspots and flares through the observatory's solar telescope and the telescopes of F.A.A.C. club members, and examination of a number of different styles of telescopes belonging to F.A.A.C. members set up to surround the observatory for the event. The original telescope and its hand-ground mirror dating to Hector J. Robinson's science class of 1961 will also be present for examination, and members of his classes will describe the experience to those interested in learning about this lost art.

For Release 9 a.m. EDT, September 6, 2009

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WHY - The Lincoln Park Public Schools Hector J. Robinson Observatory was first erected on school grounds in 1964 by 8<sup>th</sup> science teacher Hector Robinson to provide a permanent home for a 9 foot long telescope with a 12.5" mirror hand ground by his students over the course of several months in 1961. When Mr. Robinson retired in 1968, the observatory fell into disuse, and with the exception of a brief revival from 1975 – 1979, has rarely been used since. Although an exceptional instrument in its day, it deteriorated over time, and modern technology has allowed for its replacement with equipment that allows for truly remarkable viewing and photography. With the joint efforts of Dr. Timothy Dey (a native of Lincoln Park) and Mr. Leo McMaster (8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at Lincoln Park Middle School), a grant for \$15,000.00 was obtained from the Toshiba America Foundation to purchase state-of-the-art equipment that can transmit amazing images of celestial objects over the internet to computer screens in the classroom and around the globe. J.P Griggs (Historical Renovations), the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club and others have jointly supported the structural renovation and installation of the new equipment almost entirely through private funding. The observatory will now be open with the start of the new school year to mark the International Year of Astronomy 2009, the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Galileo's use of the telescope to explore the heavens.

Further Information and Photographs are available at:

<http://www.deygroup.com/telescope.htm>

<http://www.boonhill.net/faac/>

[http://boonhill.net/faac/Observatory\\_LPS/index.htm](http://boonhill.net/faac/Observatory_LPS/index.htm)

[http://boonhill.net/faac/Observatory\\_LPS/08\\_21\\_2009\\_Standard/](http://boonhill.net/faac/Observatory_LPS/08_21_2009_Standard/)