

# International Dark-Sky Association

The Light Pollution Authority

since 1988”

*“to preserve and protect the nighttime environment and our heritage of dark skies through quality outdoor lighting”*

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## Press Release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Geauga Park District Receives Provisional Status as an IDSP

Tucson, AZ, October 21, 2008 – Geauga Park District’s Observatory Park, located in Montville Township, Ohio received provisional status as a Silver Tier International Dark Sky Park by the International Dark-Sky Association for their proposed efforts to preserve a dark sky over the Nassau Observatory and surrounding park lands. The provisional status is contingent on the completion of the park’s outdoor lighting scheme, visitor’s center, and enactment of outdoor lighting ordinances in surrounding townships.

Nassau Observatory, originally built in the 1950’s, was sold to the park district by Case Western University when the University moved their research department to larger more modern instruments. The park has since been used for educational opportunities for the public. Dr. George W. Collins, II, Astronomy Professor Emeritus at Ohio State University, and former Case Western professor, remarks, “This is a remarkable site particularly for this part of the country...The Geauga County Park’s decision to devote the entire park along with the Nassau Station to astronomy is an unusual decision and one that should be loudly applauded.”

“We are excited to be involved in the transformation of this site,” said Kim Patten, IDA staff liaison to the International Dark Sky Places Committee. “This project is unique in that it combines the great history of Nassau Observatory with public education and open space preservation, securing a part of the dark skies of eastern Ohio for generations to come.” The park, which is located only 40 miles east of Cleveland, has managed to retain a visual limiting magnitude of approximately 6.2 to 6.5 (Silver Tier requirements dictate 6.0 to 6.7) and is surrounded by wetlands, old growth forests, and open fields. The park will include a visitor’s center with an area specifically designed to discuss the effects of light pollution, not only on the sky, but also on the surrounding habitat. Thomas L. Quesinberry, President of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society is excited about the designation, “[It] will not only engender a sense of awe in the wonders of astronomy, but create an awareness of the urgent need to restore and protect our night skies.”

The International Dark Sky Park program was established in 2006 by IDA, a Tucson based non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the nighttime environment. The Geauga Park District’s Observatory Park is the only provisional Silver Tier Park. It joins Gold Tier Natural Bridges National Monument (UT) and Cherry Springs State Park (PA) as those certified by the program. The program is expanding internationally during the IYA/UNESCO International Year of Astronomy 2009, to certify parks in the United Kingdom and France.

For more information, please visit:

The International Dark-Sky Association [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org)

Geauga Park District [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org)

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