



The Eastern Iowa Observatory and Learning Center

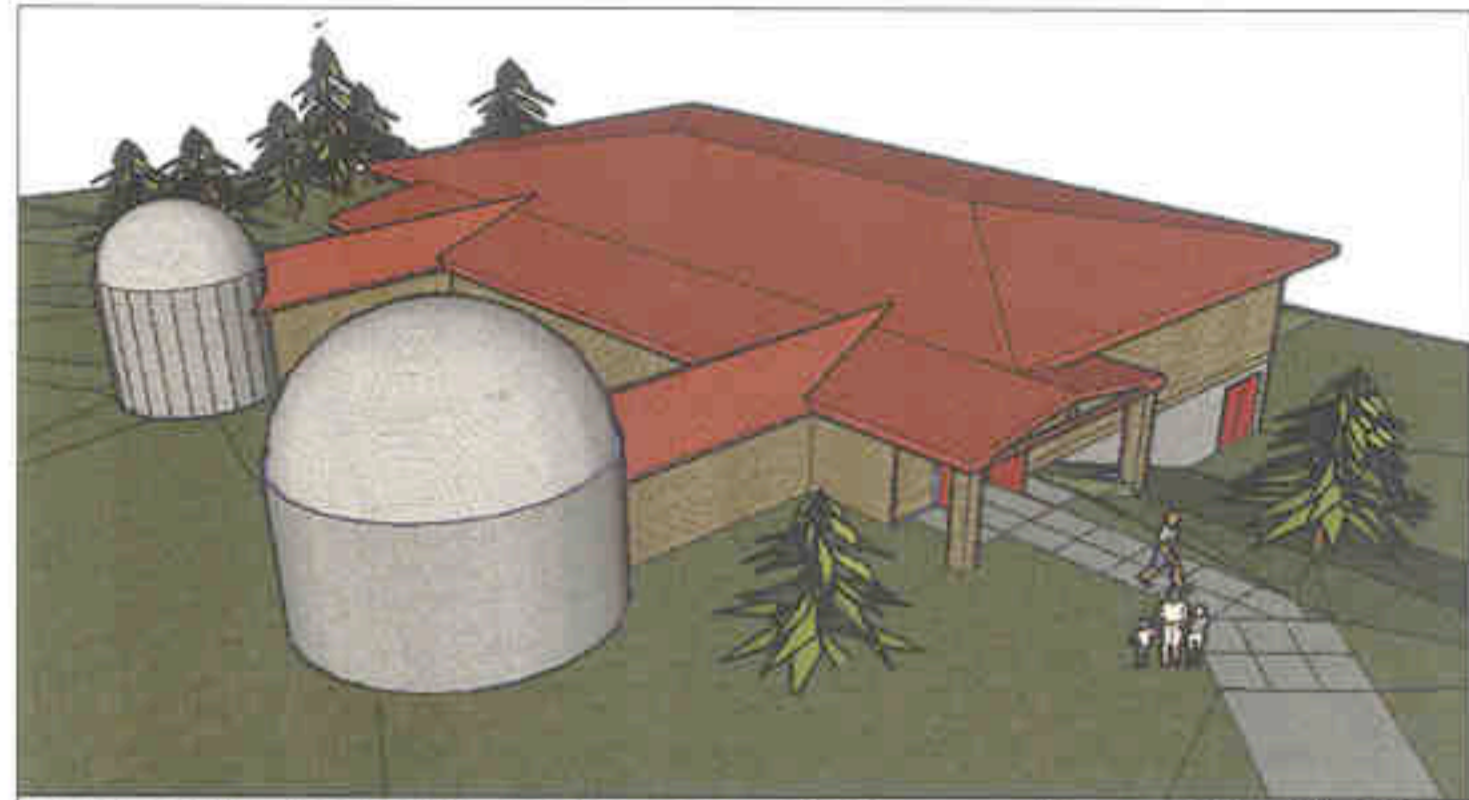


Boller & Chivens 24" Cassegrain Telescope

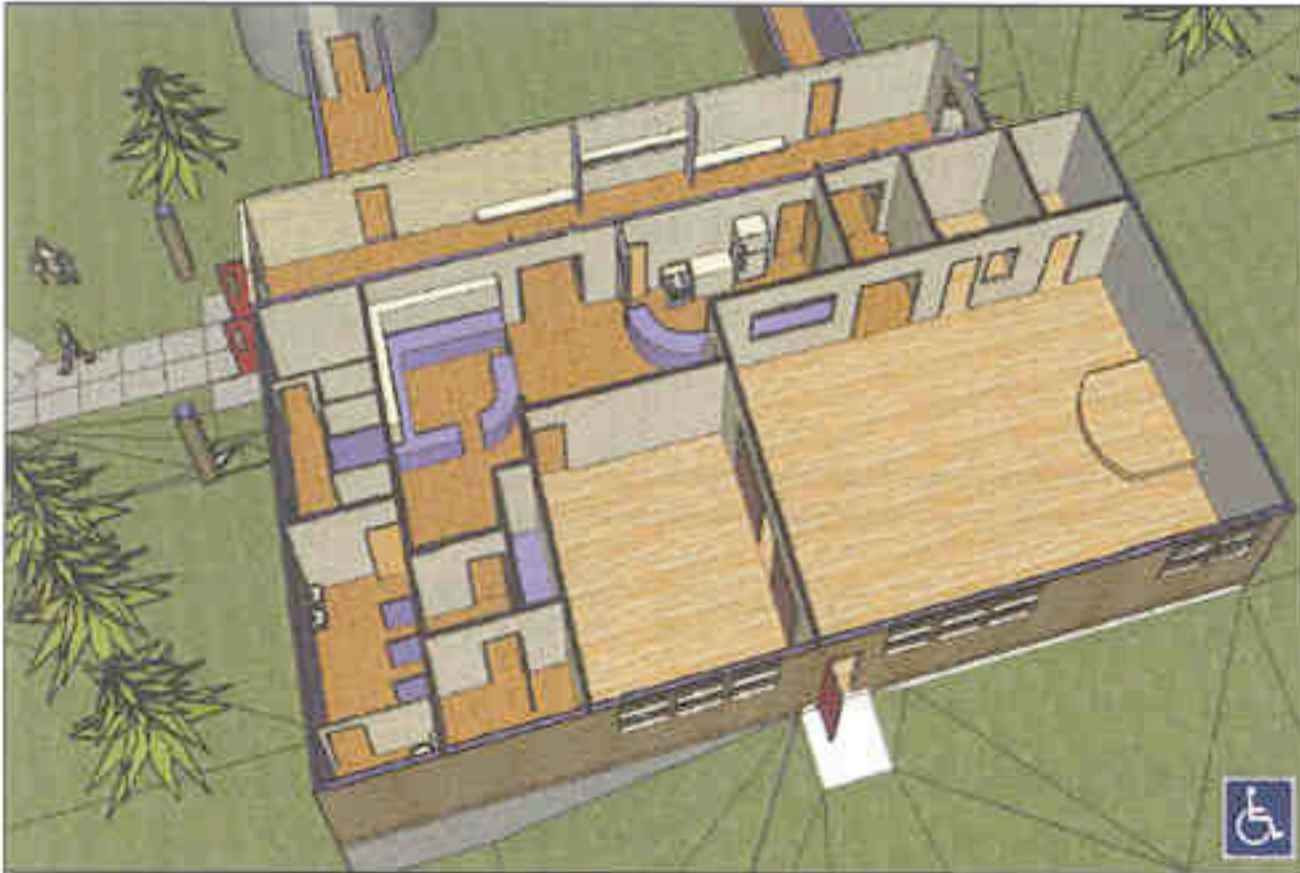
Greater Cedar Rapids and Linn County have a unique opportunity to create what will be the premier public astronomy site in Iowa. The centerpiece of this new facility will be a rare and valuable 24-inch Boller & Chivens classical Cassegrain telescope originally installed at the University of Iowa's Riverside observatory and recently gifted to the Cedar Amateur Astronomers (CAA).

A new 4600 sq. ft. facility is proposed to support the growing community interest in astronomy.

It will consist of two observatory domes, a classroom, multi-purpose presentation room, computer control room, library, storage, and restrooms. The domes will house the superb 24-inch "B&C" telescope, and a 16-inch "Robotic" telescope set up for remote control observing.



Proposed Palisades-Dows Observatory & Classroom/Presentation Facility



Interior View of Proposed Palisades-Dows Facility

This facility is to be located at the Palisades-Dows Preserve in Linn County on land currently used by the CAA in cooperation with the Linn County Conservation Department.

The architectural plans for this new facility result in a total construction budget of \$700,000. As a non-profit organization that does not charge for their programs and services, CAA looks to community groups and local businesses for funding. This facility, and the world-class astronomical instruments it will house, will have a significant positive impact on the community and education.



Our Vision

"To offer Eastern Iowa an unparalleled opportunity to promote interest and education in the science of astronomy"



Peculiar galaxy M82 in Ursa Major
(Photo contributed by Matt Neely)

We promote the study of astronomy and related sciences through free educational programs, presentations, guided observing sessions and special programs. These are available to community organizations, scouting, church groups, schools, colleges and universities. The 24-inch B&C telescope will be made available for college and university programs as well as public observing sessions. The 16-inch robotic telescope will be available to area schools for use in their science programs.

Why is this important to us? We wish to encourage the sciences through hands-on participation in astronomy. There is nothing like seeing the excitement on a young person's face when they see the rings of Saturn or a distant galaxy for the first time with their own eyes.



The Orion Nebula
(Michigan State University)