

ORANGE COUNTY ASTRONOMERS

Guidelines for OCA Sponsors and Hosts of Groups visiting the OCA Anza site

The promotion of knowledge and appreciation of astronomy are key elements of the Orange County Astronomers' charter. Field trips to our Anza site and observatory are a valuable and popular outreach activity in pursuit of this charter, to share the glory and science of the night sky with the public. In order to make these field trips safe and successful for the guests, to be a good neighbor to residents of other properties in Anza, and to properly manage the OCA's facility, the Board of Trustees has established the following guidelines for Sponsors, Hosts, and Groups at the OCA Anza Observing site. (The current version of this document is also available on the OCA website at <http://www.OCAstronomers.org/clubinfo/anzarules.htm>).

Applicability: The Anza site is for the use of OCA members, and escorted guests. Any member may host personal guests at the site without any advance coordination with the Board. The following guidelines apply to Groups of more than six guests, either at the Observatory or for any other use of the OCA site.

Escort Responsibilities for Groups of more than 6 guests:

OCA Sponsor: Each Group must be sponsored by an OCA member, who is responsible to:

- (a) Coordinate and schedule the event with the Board, through Charlie Oostdyk;
- (b) Ensure that the Group is aware of the OCA Anza site guest rules, safety considerations, and courtesy to other astronomers;
- (c) Open the site, be present for the duration of the Group's visit, and close/secure the site at the end of the Group's visit.
- (d) Promptly inform the OCA Treasurer of any serious injury or property damage that occurs during the guest event.

Anza House may be opened by the OCA Sponsor, to provide toilet, kitchen, and conference-room facilities for the Group. However, Anza House is not to be offered as sleeping quarters for non-OCA Groups.

Groups should not be scheduled for Club Star Party nights.

Group Host: Groups of non-OCA members will normally have a Host, who is responsible for the group (e.g. their scoutmaster or teacher; although the OCA member-sponsor may also act as Host). The Host will ensure that the individual group members are aware of, and agree to comply with the site's guest rules, safety considerations, and the etiquette of being a guest at an astronomical facility. For groups that include non-adults (e.g. students or scouts), the Host is responsible to provide sufficient adult supervision for the group. Based on our experience, we require a minimum of one adult per 7 non-adults. The host is also responsible for any special support that the Group may need.

OCA ANZA SITE GUEST RULES:

- No open fires at any time: the brush is extremely flammable most all of the year. Use campstoves for cooking.
- No smoking except inside your vehicle.
- No firearms or BB guns are to be used on the site.
- Park in designated areas only. Parking and/or observing are not allowed on the roads.
- Each person is responsible for removing his or her trash when leaving. There are no trash collection services on the site.
- Guests please park in the lower parking area (the "Football Field").
- Camping is allowed only in the lower parking area (the "Football Field").
- Use red flashlights only while on the site (to protect the night-vision adaptation of observers).
- If possible, turn your car's dome lights off, so that they don't come on when you open the door. If you cannot turn off, or otherwise block your dome lights, please go around and warn any other astronomers in the area BEFORE opening your car, to see if they're in the middle of a long exposure photograph. You may have to wait 20-30 minutes for the exposure to be finished before you can safely open the door. Do the same if you need to leave the site during hours of darkness.
- At all times while driving on the site after dark, either use parking lights or a guide to lead your unlit vehicle. Headlights are not to be used at any time! Note: if your car has "always on" headlights (that come on automatically when you start the ignition), and if you may be leaving the site during the night, please park at the exit-end of the "Football Field", facing the exit. Tell your OCA sponsor, before sunset, and he/she will guide you.
- Do not drive off of designated roads at any time.
- Dogs are not recommended, for their own safety (the neighbor's animals consider this "their" territory, and there are dangers in the brush). We strongly recommend that you leave your pet at home. If you must bring a dog, you must also keep it on a leash.
- Do not cut any brush or branches.
- Do not disturb any of the wildlife on the site (including the snakes).
- Please stay on roadways or walkways when walking – do not run! We suggest that guests walk in groups of 2-3 at night, as a safety measure.
- Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the Observatory.
- No loud music, shouting, or other unnecessary noises. Noise carries a long way in rural areas, and many people moved here for the quietness. Many of them have to get up in the morning to go to work; let them sleep peacefully while you're enjoying the night sky.
- Remain on the OCA site property at all times. Our neighbors have been courteous to us, and we expect our guests to give them the same courtesy of not trespassing on their property or otherwise disturbing them.

The OCA Sponsor, the ranking member of the Board of Trustees, or the Star-Member "astronomer in charge" may take action to enforce these rules. Your use of the site signifies your willingness to honor these rules.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- You will be walking in the dark, in a rugged area. Go slowly and carefully, with your red-light flashlight pointed to the ground. Be particularly careful on the stairs. No running!
- This is a rural area, and deserves your respect. Do not abuse the wildlife, and be vigilant lest the wildlife abuse you. There are coyotes in abundance in the hills: they rarely (if ever) approach people, but you will probably hear them howling during the night. There are also rattlesnakes in the brush, which have been seen on a few occasions. Ditto tarantulas. Also scorpions. And plenty of gophers and field mice. In short, all the sort of critters you'd expect in the high desert. Perhaps the most painful are the red ants: trust me, you don't want an encounter with these vicious little biters.

- Keep your food safely in your vehicle. It will protect the food from the ants, and protect you from the overly-friendly dogs in the area. Do not feed the animals, (i.e., stray dogs).
- There are no medical facilities at the site. In case of emergency, there is a small first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, and telephone in the "warming room" of the Observatory and also in the "Anza house" trailer. If members of your group may need special medical monitoring (e.g. insulin) or if your Group's policy requires trained first-aid providers, it is the Host's responsibility to provide for them. Emergency phone number is 9-1-1, or:
 - Riverside County Fire Department (Anza Station): 909-763-5611
 - Riverside County Sheriff (Hemet Station): 909 -791-3400
 - OCA contacts: Charlie Oostdyk (H: 714-751-5381, W: 714-438-4624), Liam Kennedy (949-552-6187)
- Weather in the high desert is more extreme than you may be used to at home, and the site is at over 4000 ft elevation. In the summer, it's usually warm to hot during the daytime, and warm to cool at night; sometimes cold at night. In the winter, it can be *very cold* at night: winter temperatures in the 40s are normal, and well below freezing is not unusual. Select your clothing with that in mind! It is better to bring too much, and too-warm clothing, including a warm hat, than to be shivering with regret.

COURTESY TO OTHER ASTRONOMERS:

- The land, buildings, and telescopes are the property of either OCA, or the individual members. "Look but don't touch" is a wise rule and a common courtesy when dealing with expensive instruments that belong to someone else!
- Ask the astronomers if they'll share a view with you. Many will, happily. Others may be engaged in photography or research projects and hence prefer to not be disturbed.
- No drinks, food, greasy fingers, etc. while looking through telescopes.
- Don't touch anything (such as eyepieces) while looking through the scope, without first getting confirmation or instructions from the owner.
- Please remember and abide by the light-control restrictions (red flashlights only, pointed toward the ground, no headlights, no interior dome lights).

Revision history:			
Version	date	changes from prior	status
Draft	3/6/02	--	not appv'd: OCA Board recommended changes 3/24/02
1.0	3/30/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change to apply to groups > 6 (was >10) additions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • groups should not be scheduled for star party nights • "No sleep-over" use of Anza house • suggestion that guests walk 2 or 3 together in dark 	not appv'd: distributed for review; further changes incorporated into ver 1.1 per below
1.1	4/2/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revised sentence to read: ".In case of emergency, there is a phone in the "warming room" of the Observatory and also in the "Anza house" trailer." • added website location of these guidelines. • added reference to fire extinguisher and first-aid kit at Anza house and warming room. • added plea to not feed the animals • added recommendation to bring a warm hat • added emergency phone numbers. • clarified "Club star party nights" • added phrase lower parking area (the "football field") as suggested • added Sponsor responsibility to "...be present for the duration of the Group's visit..." • added note to park near the exit for cars with "always on" headlights (now there's a piece of technology I could live without!) 	minor editorial suggestions incorporated into ver 1.2
1.2	4/6/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relocated "always-on" headlights note to "Guest Rules" section (Per TH) • clarified that 1 adult per 7 non-adults is a requirement (per BT) • added reqm't for Sponsor to report any serious injury or property damage to OCA Treasurer (per JB) 	