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## Death Valley News Release

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### **Death Valley National Park Announces Astronomy Week 2008**

*Explore the universe above Death Valley*

Winter is the time for astronomy in Death Valley National Park, with long nights and clear skies. A week of special programs and events focusing on the sky above Death Valley will take place January 28<sup>th</sup> through February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

The skies above Death Valley National Park offer some of the best opportunities to observe naturally dark skies. Rangers, guest speakers, and amateur astronomers will present a variety of programs throughout the week highlighting this amazing, often unnoticed, and disappearing resource.

Safely view sunspots through special solar telescopes at Scotty's Castle and Furnace Creek. Marvel at the thousands of stars above your head during evening talks at Mesquite Springs Campground. Accompany a ranger on a night hike. Explore the mysteries of the universe in the Furnace Creek Auditorium. Grasp the scale of the solar system on a walk of the planets. Compare Death Valley's landscape with the surface of Mars. Astronomy Week will culminate with a star party on Saturday evening, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Furnace Creek Airport. That night, join illustrated programs at Furnace Creek and then observe the night sky through a variety of telescopes courtesy of the Las Vegas Astronomical Society, and observe real time images of stars.

“As our population centers continue to grow so do the number of lights that provide for safety and security as well as advertisements and entertainment”, states Superintendent JT Reynolds. “Unfortunately it also means the night skies are being neglected and are rapidly becoming a disappearing resource.” Superintendent Reynolds wishes to invite everyone to take advantage of Death Valley's dark skies, clear winter air, and mild temperatures for a week of exploring the universe.

For more information about Death Valley National Park and Astronomy Week, including a schedule of events, check out the park's web site at [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva), or call the park at 760-786-3200.

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