



## **Chabot Space & Science Center Begins Use of Proposition 40 Funds To Preserve Historic Telescopes**

*—Work Begins June 13, 2005—*

OAKLAND, CA (June 9, 2005) — Patching and sealing of the domes used to house Chabot Space & Science Center's two historic telescopes begins next week and is the first phase in using Proposition 40 funds to protect the telescopes and make them more accessible to the public. The first phase is to safeguard the telescopes against damage from moisture, as leaks have been a problem in the domes, sometimes forming large puddles on the floor. The work will commence on Monday, June 13 by Observa-Dome, the original builders of the observatory domes, and will be completed by week's end.

"Luckily we have been able to reposition the telescopes during the rain so that they do not get wet," said Alex Barnett, Chabot's Executive Director. "But we need foolproof protection against the weather in order to keep them safe and operational. We want to continue to provide the public regular and free access to the telescopes so that they can discover the wonders of the Universe with their very own eyes."

Proposition 40, passed in 2002, is also known as the Historical and Cultural Resources Preservation Opportunity Grant program. Administered by the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, one of its purposes is to preserve California's historical resources. The next phase of Chabot's plans includes an interpretative exhibit inside the observatory domes about the history of Chabot and its telescopes. Chabot Space & Science Center is the continuation and expansion of a public observatory that has served San Francisco Bay Area schools and citizens with astronomy and science education programs for over 122 years. The institution began in 1883 as the Oakland Observatory, through a gift from Anthony Chabot to the City of Oakland. The original Oakland Observatory was located in downtown Oakland, and provided public telescope viewing for the community. For decades, it also served as the official timekeeping station for the entire Bay Area, measuring time with its transit telescope. Chabot's historic 8" Alvan Clark refractor telescope, named "Leah," is the original 1883 instrument donated by benefactor Anthony Chabot. The 20" refracting telescope, named "Rachel," was commissioned in 1914 from Warner & Swasey, with optics by John Brashear. Telescopes are open free to the public on Friday and Saturday evenings, from dusk to 10 pm, weather permitting.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Chabot Space and Science Center is nonprofit teaching and learning center focusing on astronomy and the inter-relationships of all the sciences. Its observatory, planetarium, exhibits, and natural park setting are a place where a diverse population of students, teachers, and the public can imagine, understand, and learn to shape their future through science.

**For more information, call (510) 336-7300, or visit [www.chabotspace.org](http://www.chabotspace.org)**

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